A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION

TX: 008 JULY 1988

£1.25

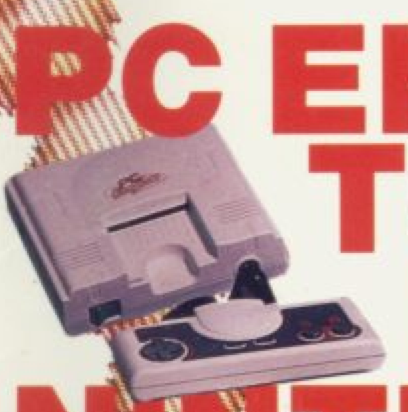
DM 7.50
US $3.50
CAN $3.95

the GAMES machine

COMPUTER & ELECTRONIC ENTERTAINMENT



PC ENGINE TO BEAT NINTENDO?

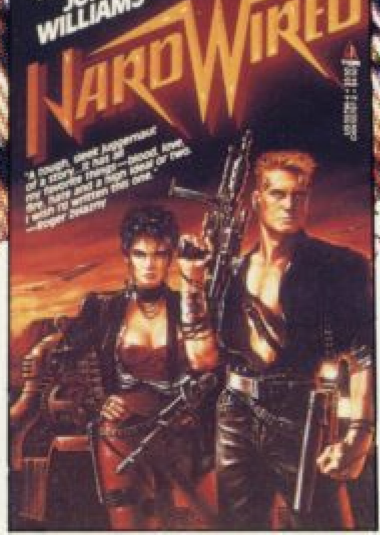


TGM explains why R-TYPE is tipped to make PC Engine a world beater



CYBERPUNK

New wave microchip literature



FREESCAPE WINS OUT

DARK SIDE and DRILLER PC are amazing!

REUSABLE CD-ROM

The future is almost here . . .

SHOULD BULLETIN BOARDS BE ALLOWED?

Mel Croucher investigates

ENGAGE PHOTON DRIVE

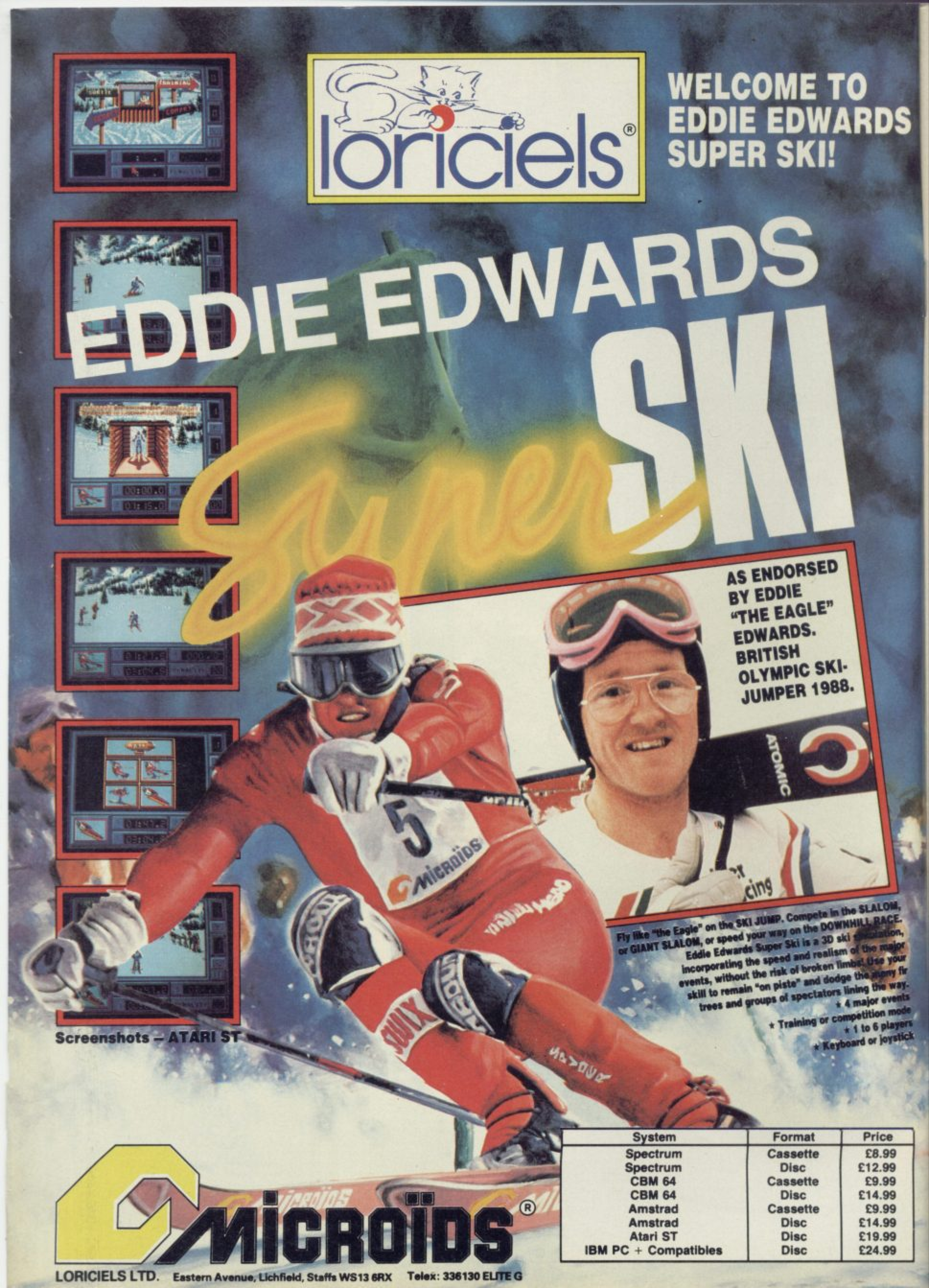
Incredible new Amiga art utility revealed

07

74470 72670 8


ALIEN SYNDROME
SEGA


C+VG HIT!
SIZZLER
coin OP HIT!
ACE
Spectrum
Atari ST
Commodore 64
Atari ST
SEGA'S MOST AWESOME COIN-OP EVER!
TAPE: Spectrum £8.99; C64/Amstrad £9.99
DISK: Spectrum +3/Amstrad £14.99; C64 £11.99; Atari ST/Amiga £19.99
"If Ace can maintain this standard in their conversions then gamers are in for a treat. Ace game." – C&VG
"The arcade version of Alien Syndrome is simply brilliant and this conversion manages to capture all the original atmosphere and spirit." – ZZAP SIZZLER!
ACE: The new name for the best in coin-ops!
Tel: 01 831 1801 Fax: 01 836 1725
© SEGA 1987. This game has been manufactured under license from Sega Enterprises Ltd., Japan, and "ALIEN SYNDROME™" and "SEGA™" are trademarks of Sega Enterprises Ltd. Coding © 1988. Programmed by Softek International Ltd.



System	Format	Price
Spectrum	Cassette	£8.99
Spectrum	Disc	£12.99
CBM 64	Cassette	£9.99
CBM 64	Disc	£14.99
Amstrad	Cassette	£9.99
Amstrad	Disc	£14.99
Atari ST	Disc	£19.99
IBM PC + Compatibles	Disc	£24.99

the GAMES machine

COMPUTER & ELECTRONIC ENTERTAINMENT

ISSUE 8 JULY 1988

THIS ISSUE . .

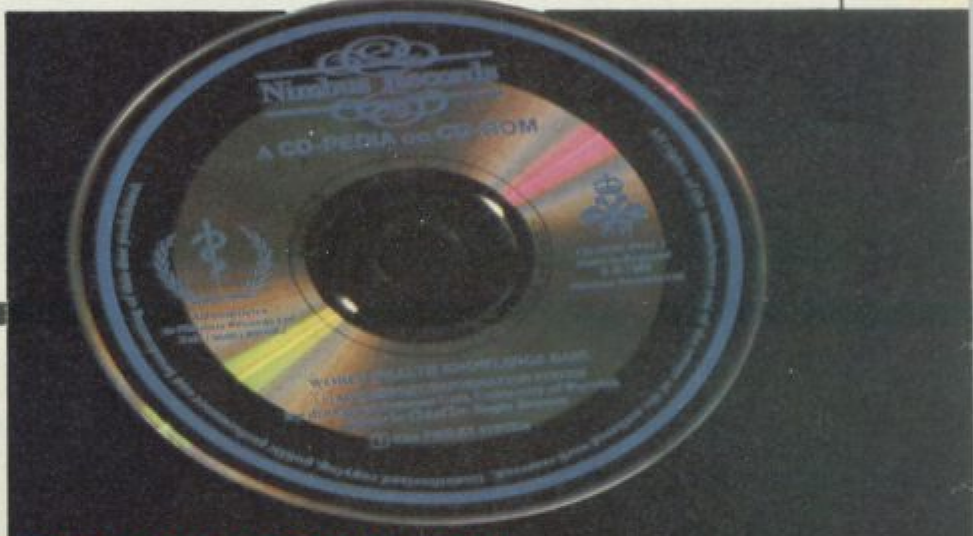
REGULARS

FEATURES

THE CAMCORDER REVOLUTION

Still a yuppie dream, the reality of today will be tomorrow's commonplace when computers lie down with video. Mel Croucher advises on the new generation of Camcorders for your kit PAGE 97

COMPETITIONS



THE CD-ROM REVOLUTION

9 million words take up just a fifth of a compact disc – now reusable discs are a reality, as Barnaby Page explains PAGE 26



THE MIDGET MONSTER

It weighs almost nothing, fits a hand and knocks arcade machines into a cocked hat. Will *R-TYPE* and the PC ENGINE give Nintendo a run for its money?
PAGE 28

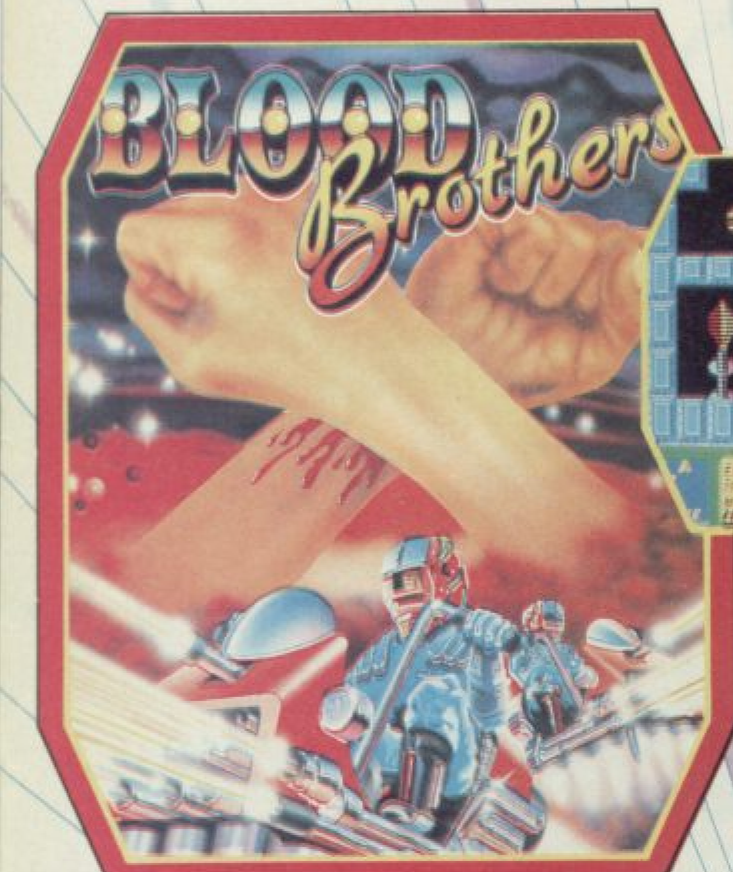
Issue 9 of THE GAMES MACHINE goes on sale from July 21 – see page 122 for details – don't miss it because it will be packed with essential features, reviews and articles – as usual!

EDITORIAL *47 Gravel Hill, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1QS* ☎ 0584 5851/2/3 **Editor:** Oliver Frey **Assistant Editor:** Nik Wild **Software Coordinator:** Richard Eddy **Staff Writers:** Robin Hogg, Stuart Wynne **Editorial Assistant:** Frances Mable **Photography:** Cameron Pound, Michael Parkinson (Assistant) **Contributors:** Jon Bates, Robin Candy, Mel Croucher, Robin Evans, John Gilbert, Roger Kean, Barnaby Page, Marshal M Rosenthal, Rob Steel, John Woods **PRODUCTION** *1/2 King Street, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1AQ* ☎ 0584 5851/2/3 **Art Director:** Markie Kendrick **Assistant Art Director:** Wayne Allen **Design & Layout:** Yvonne Priest, Melvin Fisher **Pre-Print Manager:** Jonathan Rignall **Reprographics/film planning:** Matthew Uffindell, Nick Orchard, Ian Chubb, Robert Millichamp **Publishing Controller:** David Western **Editorial Director:** Roger Kean **Advertisement Manager:** Roger Bennett **Sales Executives:** Andrew Smales, Sarah Chapman **Assistant:** Jackie Morris ☎ (0584) 4603 **OR** (0584) 5852 **MAIL ORDER** Carol Kinsey **SUBSCRIPTIONS** Denise Roberts *PO Box 20, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB*. Typeset by the **Tortoise Shell Press**, *Ludlow*. Colour origination by **Scan Studios**, *Wallace Road, London N1*. Printed in England by **Carlisle Web Offset**, *Newtown Trading Estate, Carlisle, Cumbria CA2 7NR* – a member of the BPCC Group. Distribution by **COMAG**, *Tavistock Road, West Drayton, Middlesex*.

COMPETITION RULES The Editor's decision is final in all matters relating to adjudication and while we offer prizes in good faith, believing them to be available, if something untoward happens (like a game that has been offered as a prize being scrapped) we reserve the right to substitute prizes of comparable value. We'll do our very best to despatch prizes as soon as possible after the published closing date. Winners names will appear in a later issue of THE GAMES MACHINE. No correspondence can be entered into regarding the competitions (unless we've written to you stating that you have won a prize and it doesn't turn up, in which case drop Frances Mable a line at the PO Box 10 address). No person who has any relationship, no matter how remote, to anyone who works for either Newsfield or any of the companies offering prizes, may enter one of our competitions.

COVER DESIGN & ILLUSTRATION BY OLIVER FREY

Always ahead of their time

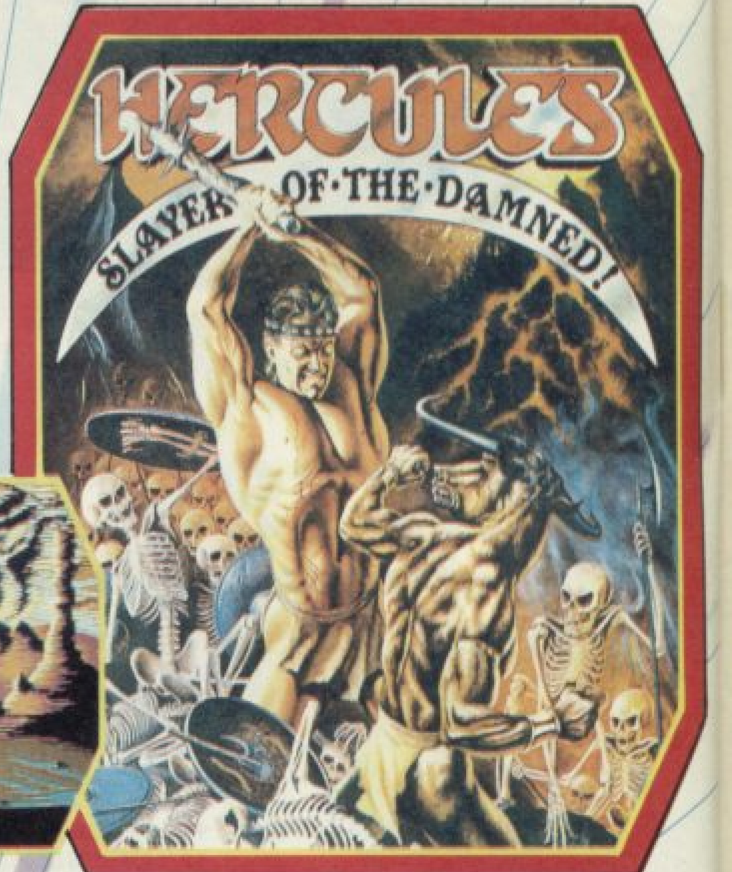


Screen shot from Spectrum version.





Screen shot from CBM 64/128 version.



CBM 64/128 **£9.99**t – **£14.99**d

Spectrum **£7.99**t – **+3 £12.99**d

Amstrad **£9.99**t – **£14.99**d

CBM 64/128 **£9.99**t – **£14.99**d
Spectrum **£7.99**t – **+3 £12.99**d
Amstrad **£9.99**t – **£14.99**d
MSX **£7.99**t
Atari ST **£19.99**d

GREMLIN

Don't miss these 4 great new releases from the creators of the most original and exciting games of all time.

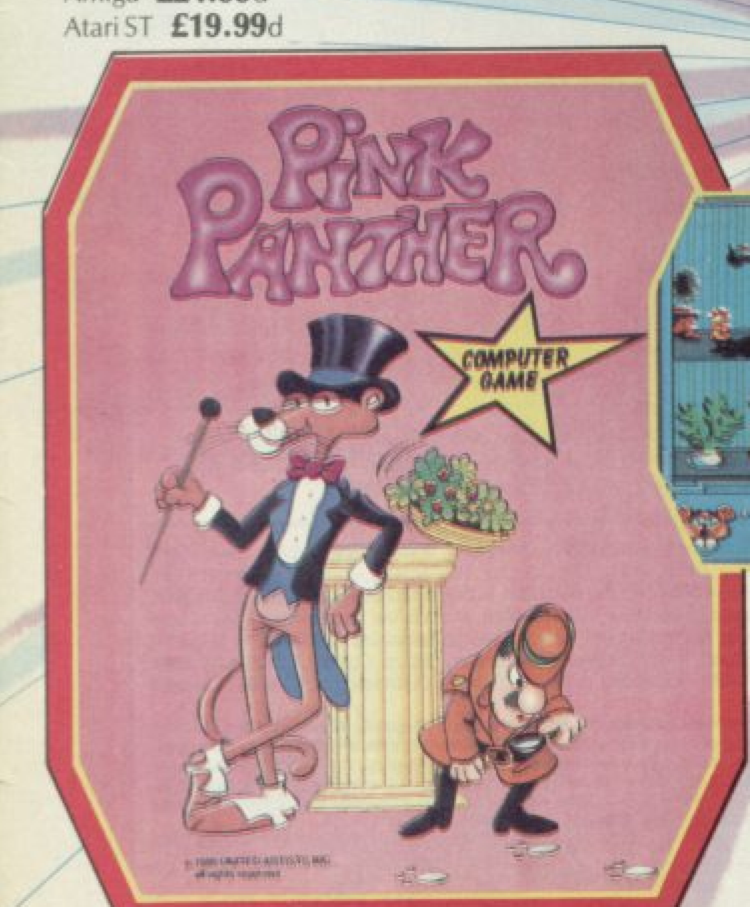
CBM 64/128 **£9.99**t – **£14.99**d
Spectrum **£7.99**t – **+3 £12.99**d
Amstrad **£9.99**t – **£14.99**d
Amiga **£24.99**d
Atari ST **£19.99**d

Become a warrior of the future with Blood Brothers or a warrior of the past in Hercules, Slayer of the Damned. Enter the crazy world of the Pink Panther or enjoy two different games in one with Skate Crazy – the "Car Park Challenge" and the "Championship Course."

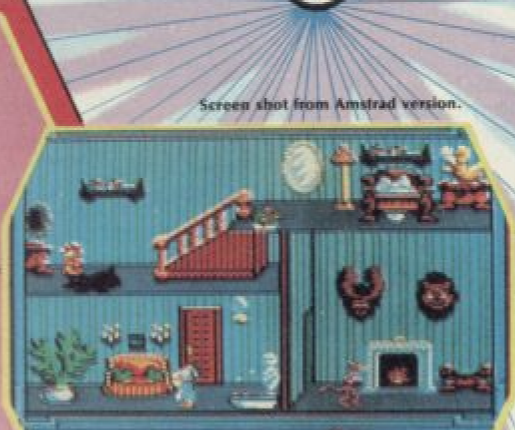
CBM 64/128 **£9.99**t – **£14.99**d

Spectrum **£7.99**t – **+3 £12.99**d

Amstrad **£9.99**t – **£14.99**d



Screen shot from Amstrad version.





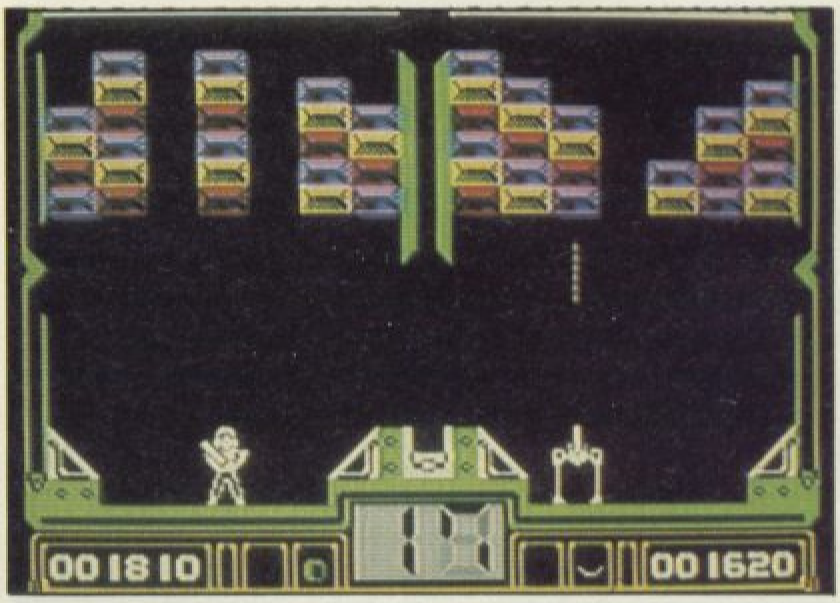
Screen shot from Amstrad version.



All mail order enquiries to: Gremlin Graphics Software Ltd., Alpha House, 10 Carver Street, Sheffield S1 4FS.

FRACTURED LIGHT

From a multicoloured past, can the historical fragments of the Prism Leisure Corporation combine again? The company's taken a backseat for a while, but this month, with the launch of Football Manager II**, Prism spearheads a new campaign, with some great titles from its five entertainment labels. Richard Eddy – designer-label specialist – investigates**



One of the five main Commodore 64 playing screens in Hot Shot*, a highly addictive game – suck it to me one-time.*

Prism Leisure Corporation may sound a pretentious title if you only know its software operation, however Prism is a large corporate body with distribution, sales, record labels, merchandising and packaging covering worldwide leisure markets. It has a history too.

In 1980 it was modestly-named Geoff's Records after its chairman Geoff Young. It began by publishing old record titles deleted from the mainstream market, and in 1983 created the Platinum Music label.

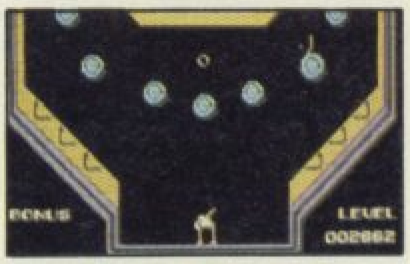
At the start of the Spectrum era Prism was born as a marketing force, and later still, Geoff created its first software label, **Endurance Games**, specialising in converting games across a range of machines and publishing them – the first title was *International Karate* on Spectrum and Amstrad.

This year Prism launched three new labels: **PC Leisure**, **ST Leisure** and **Amiga Leisure**; the aim: to provide 16-bit games at the budget price of £12.99. Sadly, the first few were poor and never made it to the review pages. Prism promise this is set to change.

Kicking off the new range of ST and Amiga Leisure products is ***Artificial Dreams*** – an original twist on the vertically scrolling shoot-'em-up theme designed and written by **Maxwell Technologies**, a development house run by **John Maxwell**, once part of the Mastertronic management. He scooped up **David Jones** *(Magic Knight, Spellbound, Stormbringer)* as project leader for ***Artificial Dreams*** and others.

As the space scenery scrolls upward, the object is to manoeuvre a space ship through a maze and additional hazards. Control is eight-directional. It isn't until ***Artificial Dreams*** is played that you appreciate its highly addictive and tactical gameplay. At £12.99 it's a snip.

Also from Maxwell Technology is the futuristic sports game ***Hot Shot*** – a combination of squash



The Hot Shot *bonus screen*

and Breakout, using vacuum cleaners, or graviton guns as they're known. Set in an arena,

Hot Shot is a two-player game. Catch the ball and control it to knock score blocks and rebound off the pinball bumpers. ***Hot Shot*** is essentially a simple game, well-programmed and immensely enjoyable.

Richard Hennerly, Prism's PR Manager deems it 'a wonderful combination of action and violence', (players can attack each other with the plasma ball.) 'But not serious violence . . . almost a black comedy sports game,' he

A combination of maze/puzzle/ shoot-'em-up merges to make the addictive Artificial Dreams – Atari ST screen



KRISTAL CREATIONS

PRISM is currently working on its biggest software project ever. Called ***The Kristal***, it looks like being the most imaginative piece of software dreamed up for a long time. THE GAMES MACHINE will be taking a close look at the project, but here's some exclusive news . . .

The Kristal is the brainchild of **Mike Suitin** whose background lies in the music and moods of the Sixties. He was stage manager for dramatic and exceptional stages shows such as *Hair* and *Jesus Christ Superstar* and also designed the psychedelic backdrops for many of Pink Floyd's concerts.

The Kristal was originally designed as a stage show written by Mike, but never made it to the theatres even though a full two-hour sound track sung by Elaine Page and the cast of *Hair* was recorded.

Mike, now working with computers, specialises in the 16-bit market – primarily Amiga and ST. Working with Mike are two animators, one background artist, four coders and a host of others. Prism's Export Manager, **Mark Pearce**, is heavily involved and he says of it: 'It is a very intensive project and very important to all of us – we want to show the world that something really special can be done. ***The Kristal*** *will* be a graphic and sonic masterpiece. ***The Kristal***, right down to the storyline, is magical and very fascinating. The way Mike tells it is a real experience . . . '

Stay tuned to THE GAMES MACHINE for the full story soon as told by Mike and his colleagues.

THE FUTURE FROM PRISM

SPECTRUM
Hot Shot £7.99 August
Metaplex £2.99 June

COMMODORE 64/128
Hot Shot £9.99/£12.99 August
Metaplex £2.99/ £6.99 June
BattleStations £2.99 June

ATARI ST
Artificial Dreams £12.99 July
Terraforce £12.99 July
Rocket Roger £12.99 July
Pub Games £12.99 October
Hot Shot £19.99 August
The Kristal £24.99 October
Arac £12.99 November

AMIGA
Terraforce £12.99 July
Hot Shot £19.99 August
Addictaball £12.99 September
Who Dares Wins II £12.99 September
Zed £12.99 September
Rocket Roger £12.99 September
BattleStations £12.99 September
Artificial Dreams £12.99 September
The Kristal £24.99 October
Trap £12.99 October
Pub Games £12.99 October
Arac £12.99 November

IBM PC
Brix II £9.99 June
Who Dares Wins II £9.99 September
BattleStations £9.99 November
Zed £9.99 November

explains. 'Though ***Hot Shot*** has only five main playing screens, they are all different and require different tactics to become proficient in each. And the bizarre collection of alien opponents all possess their own particular combat capabilities and tactics.'

Hot Shot is set for a full-price mid-August release across Commodore 64/128, Spectrum, Amstrad CPC, Atari ST, Amiga and IBM PC formats.

Leisure labels at £12.99.

In addition to Maxwell Technology, Prism also has **Alligata** now working for them, producing most of their ST/Amiga/PC Leisure titles – so old favourites make 16-bit appearances, including ***Who Dares Wins II***, ***Zed***, ***Trap***, ***Addictaball*** and ***Pub Games*** as well as some original titles like ***BattleStations***, a cross-fire shoot-'em-up.

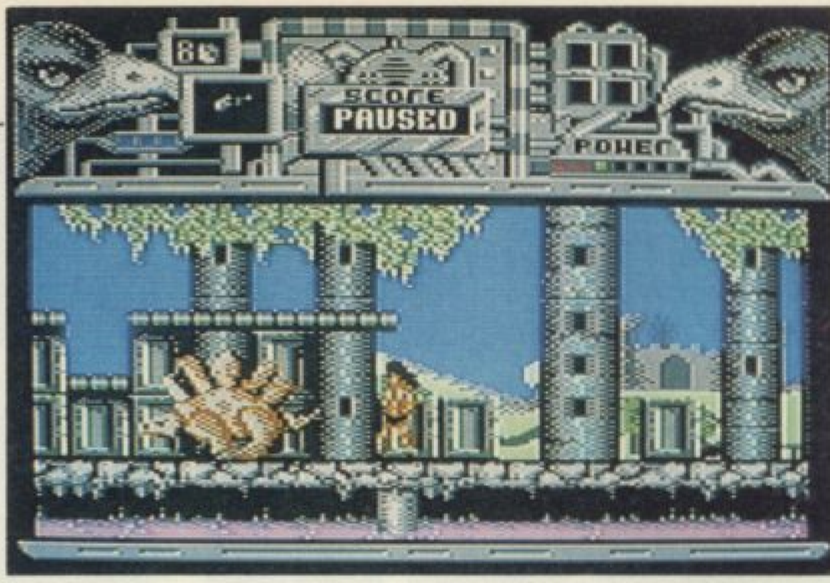
'Alligata were the right team to

Terraforce: Flying in from Prism later this year – Atari ST screen

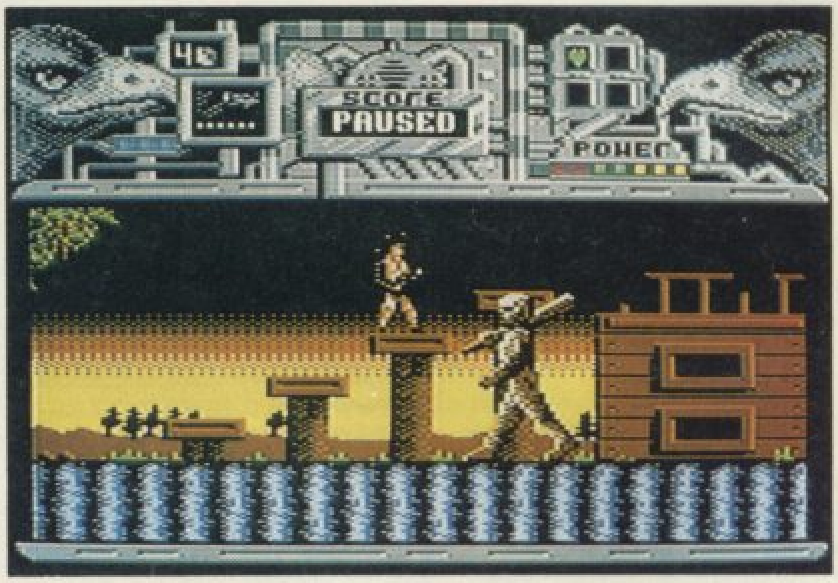


Back to the ST and Amiga for ***Terraforce*** in August – at the moment in its early stages. It's an exciting flight through four sideways scrolling screens, including passage across sky and seascapes. Fight the battling aliens with four weapons to reach The Void for an all out amramgeddon strike (so it says here . . .) ***Terraforce*** is scheduled for release on the ST and Amiga

produce games for the Leisure range,' enthuses Hennerly. 'Though most are conversions from 8-bit games, the price-point is just right – while many companies are releasing any old thing on the 16-bitters and bashing it out at 20, 25 quid, we are happier producing a decent game at a decent price: £12.99 – or £9.99 for the PC range.'



Stagger at the sight of the Stegasaurus – Hawkeye *did*



High noon for Hawkeye *in the wild west scene as the goliath approaches – Commodore 64 screen*

HAWKEYE THE NOO

Not a brain between them, doesn't sound like a recipe for software success, but THALAMUS isn't bothered. The company dived into the Europool to drag a four-man Dutch development team called Boys Without Brains screaming into the UK limelight

It's their first game, it's been in development for almost a year, it's called ***Hawkeye***. For the **Boys Without Brains** it's an exciting moment. This isn't the first time **Thalamus** has relied on Europe for its programmers – Stavros Fasoulas (*Sanxion*, *Delta*, *Quedex*) is Finnish, and he actually introduced the Boys to Thalamus.

For the record, they are: **Mario Van Zeist** (coder), **Jacco Van 'T Riet** (coder), **Artur Van Jole** (graphics) and **Jaroen Tel** (sound).

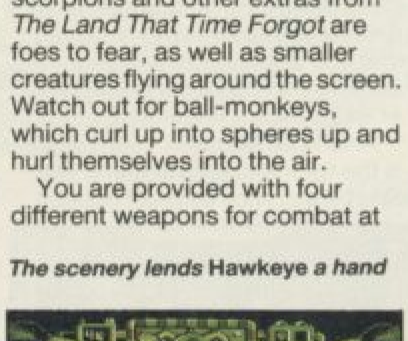
Hawkeye is for the Commodore 64/128 (surprise!), and features 12 levels of horizontally scrolling arcade combat action similar to *Rastan* – but ***Hawkeye*** features excellent parallax scrolling between the fore-, middle- and background screen layers.

In ***Hawkeye***'s you battle through the 12 levels, controlling the actions of the heroically-bronzed figure (as yet unnamed) searching for a four-piece puzzle on each level. Collecting the 12 puzzles enables the character to revert from his current robot state to his more normal human body.

Each level has its own individual theme, ranging from the wild west to, what looks like, a crumbling ancient Roman city – however, as familiar as these settings may be, the inhabitants are not . . . prehistoric creatures, giant scorpions and other extras from *The Land That Time Forgot* are foes to fear, as well as smaller creatures flying around the screen. Watch out for ball-monkeys, which curl up into spheres up and hurl themselves into the air.

You are provided with four different weapons for combat at

The scenery lends Hawkeye *a hand*



the outset, but maintaining a good supply of ammunition is a problem.

Thalamus Managing Director **Paul Cooper**, who signed up the boys at last year's PCW Show, is pleased at their achievement: 'The whole package is very impressive, graphically, sonically – and it plays well. The parallax effect is brilliant and just goes to prove that the Commodore's hardware can still be pushed even further. It's good to be producing a game from a team new to the business. They're new blood with fresh ideas.'

With a provisional release date of late-July, ***Hawkeye*** will be available on both cassette (£9.99) and disk (including a selection of demos – £12.99). An Amiga version is a possibility later on. Also coming soon from Thalamus is ***Amourlite*** from **Cybadyne Systems**, but more news of that in the months to come.

IN PRODUCTION

TURNING TURTLE

THREE arcade games and an 'intelligent' American chess package marks the return of business software publisher **Logotron**. They entered the leisure side of software last year with *Xor*, have been quiet since, and are now ready to hit with three arcade action games and . . .

Sargon II, a chess package, developed in America. Logotron say it's the best ever, with 68,000 opening moves and 107 classic games and it has taken 21 man-years to develop. Imminent release for Commodore 64/128, 8-bit Atari, IBM PC, Amiga and Atari ST.

StarRay kicks off the 16-bit product range – a horizontally scrolling shoot-'em-up, it makes use of an impressive parallax scrolling routine. As it stands, ***StarRay*** is looking like a real tester



Jungle scene from one of the seven levels in StarRay – Amiga screen

for players with itchy trigger fingers and a good ear for sound; there's a neat theme tune and some vicious explosions. It was programmed in Germany by **Hidden Treasures** and has already been warmly received there – full story on the Amiga next month. Other versions of ***StarRay*** to watch out for are Atari ST, Commodore 64/128 and IBM PC (that should be interesting!).

And if you're looking for programming names, Logotron have snapped up two of the best 16-bit programmers – **Graham 'Kenny' Everett** and graphics man **Steve Cain** (*Frankie Goes To Hollywood* and, more recently *Black Lamp* for Firebird.) Their



Have a gander at Star Goose the latest game from Graham 'Kenny' Everett and Steve Cain

latest project is ***Star Goose***, it's set for a 16-bit launch initially. On the bizarre world of Nom, you are the pilot of a ground-skimming vehicle pitched against a variety of defences forces in culverts, tunnels and on the plains of the strange planet.

'It was inspired,' says Graham, 'by the kind of car race, often seen in movies, where the cars race around a basin-like track with curved sides. At first ***Star Goose*** was intended to be a first-person-perspective race-game travelling through a series of tunnels. But we weren't happy with the overall effect so we've switched the view to an overhead-from-behind one; it makes the action much more visible.'

It is difficult to appreciate ***Star Goose*** from the static screen shot, the way the ship gathers intertia and rolls around the planet surface is excellent. Atari ST and Amiga versions will be out in August (£19.95) and a PC game to follow in September.

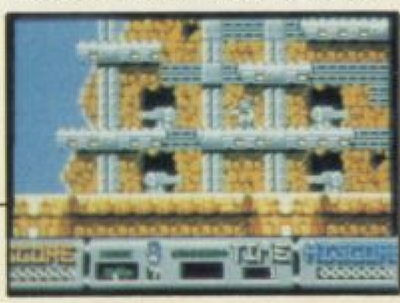
Last, ***Quadralien***, written by **Astral Software** – their first product for the Atari ST and Amiga – combines arcade action with strategy so while you're wandering around the vast graphical complex of Astra disposing of as many alien forces as possible, the other brain-draining task is to use all six robots at your disposal to sort out a nuclear-fission plant which has gone out of control and prevent it melting down.

FURIOUS . . . ?

. . . OR just plain hoppin' mad? **Elite** certainly is with the late-June release ***Hoppin' Mad***. Take control of four balls all at once and guide them through forest and beach scenes bouncing over cacti, ducking the birds and bees and a host of other prickly characters – certainly a deflating experience. on the Commodore 64/128 and Spectrum, review next month.

It's all GO! with **Capcom** as more arcade conversions come under the hammer: yet more versions of the smashing ***Bionic Commando*** (TGM**007** 86%), pictured here is the Atari ST version – also to come are Amstrad CPC and Amiga versions. Also, take a look at the ST version of ***Street Fighter***, hitting the shops soon. On the brand-new front are conversions of the vertically scrolling fighter plane shoot-'em-up ***1943*** closely followed by ***Black Tiger***. The latter places you in a mystical land full of demonic creatures; if you can rescue a few dainty damsels from the dangerous grasp of a trio of vicious dragons, you're a winner. Conversions onto Spectrum, Commodore 64/128, Amstrad CPC and 16-bit machines are expected in the summer . . .

And next month the Preview Department has something special for you . . . We are zooming off in search of some hot Capcom news straight from the States, with the low-down on new Capcom arcade machines which are making their débuts late this year and information on when you can expect to be playing them on the small screen. The exclusive Capcom Countdown feature is part and parcel of TGM**009**.





On the Atari ST the graphics are practically the same as the coin-op version of Street Fighter from Capcom

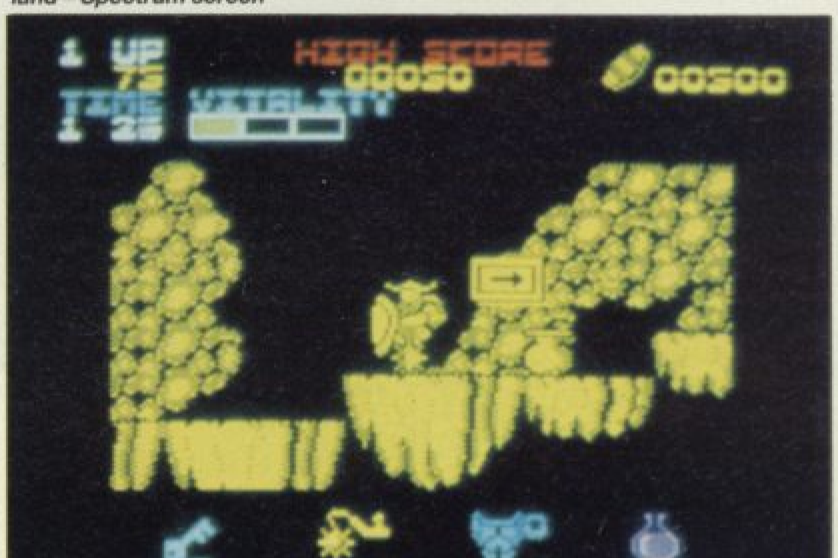


1943: the year after, and it's still just as tough in the skies – Atari ST screen

ROCK DA HOUSE

THERE'S no chance of kicking the hobbit quite yet as **Melbourne House** reveal that a third ***Lord Of The Rings*** adventure is set for a

The hero of Black Tiger at the beginning of his quest through a mystical land – Spectrum screen



late-summer release on Atari ST, Amiga and IBM PC and major 8-bit conversions planned for September. Very little information about the game itself as yet but there's always the screen shots . . .

The ever expanding **Binary Design** (new office in Bristol, new graphics studio, Andy Hieke's waistline . . .), have just completed ***Vectorball***, up for release soon by **Mastertronic** across Spectrum, Amstrad CPC, Commodore 64/128, Atari ST, Amiga and IBM PC formats. ***Vectorball*** is a two-player futuristic soccer game on a pitch with vector-drawn hills and valleys. Both players take control of a robot and try and gain possession of a ball to push it into the goalmouths either end of the pitch. The pitch scrolls diagonally (except on the Commodore 64/128 where a flip-screen technique is used) and is smooth on all versions.

However, while the 8-bit graphics are all displayed as vector line drawings, the 16-bits are more colourful, as **Nick Vincent**, Project Manager explains: 'On the ST and Amiga we have used an intensity shaded pitch, using eight variations on one colour, to display the hills and valleys. The robots were drawn as vector graphics and filled by the computer and a light source was added using *Videoscape 3-D*.'

Complete with sampled theme tune and sound effects, ***Vectorball*** is on your screens soon costing £2.99 on 8-bit and £9.99 on 16-bit.

DEEPER DUNGEONS

'KLANG, thud, spurt (!), Aaaaargh!' says the press release, and well it might too as it announces the arrival of ***Barbarian II: The Dungeon Of Drax*** from **Palace Software**. Bit of a difference this time since Princess Mariana (Maria Whittaker) forms part of the fighting team alongside Barbarian (Mike Van Myjk) – the player can choose who to control. Like the original, ***Barbarian II*** features great gameplay, gory animation and another helping of **Richard Joseph**'s atmospheric sound FX.

The game is multiload, and has a large mappable playing area of around 60 screens, complete with a bevy of characterfully gothic monsters adding a black comedy feel. It will be available in August for the Commodore 64/128, Spectrum, Amstrad CPC, Atari ST and Amiga.

LANKHOR LIFT OFF

FRENCH software is growing more popular in Britain, and it's hardly surprising – they do have a knack for producing original ideas. Now software house **Lankhor** is due to enter the UK market this June thanks to the marketing, sales and distribution firm **Active**.

One of the first games is a cult French adventure called



Are you sitting comfortably? This peaceful scene belies the action to follow in Mortvielle Manor, an adventure from Lankhor

Mortiville Manor, which won three top awards in the big French computer magazine *Tilt*. It's a mysterious *Cluedo*-styled adventure in classic whodunnit guise, which combines text and speech to help the adventurer through a murder inquiry. Available for Atari ST and Amiga by the time you read this, it's priced at £24.95. In October there is the sequel – ***Maupiti Island***.

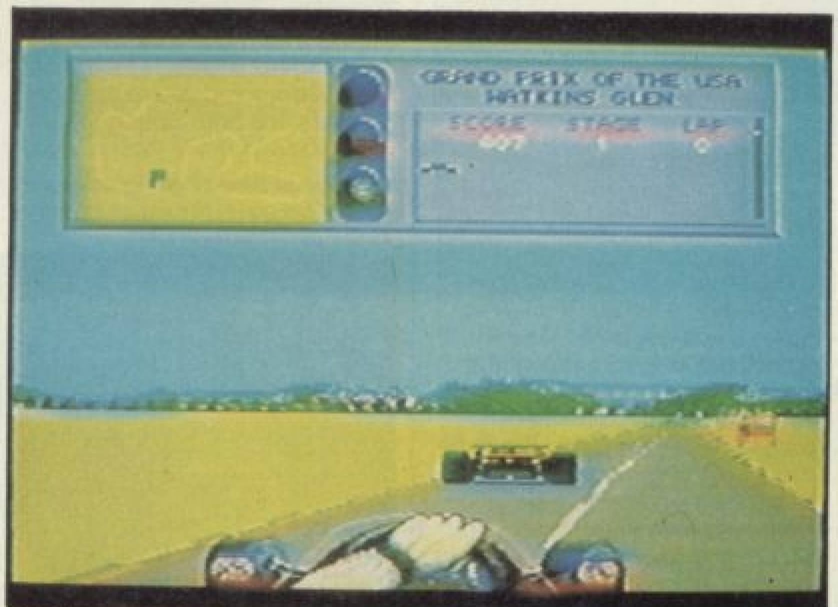
G'nius (July, Atari ST, £19.95) is



G'nius ***on the ST, from Lankhor***

a cartoon arcade game featuring robots pushing each others about and knocking down walls. And also in July we'll see of what Lankhor can do with the Commodore 64/128 in ***No!***, an intriguing animated graphic adventure making use of the WIMP environment. With 110 beautifully drawn locations, the objective is to kill a strange alien being before it kills you.

Vroom is an aptly titled car-racing game set on some of the



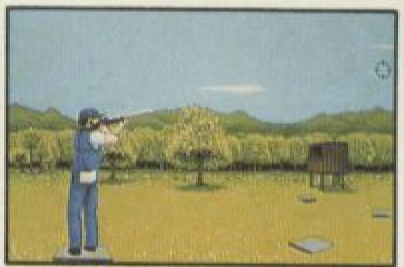
Voila **Vroom**, ***le jollie grand prix. C'est trés brill***

world's most hazardous courses. Complete with music and smashing sound FX, ***Vroom*** has a September release date on the Atari ST priced at £19.95,

CLASH OF THE TITUS

TITUS is the company which gave us *Crazy Cars* and with hands still firmly on the wheel, the next game is ***Fire And Forget***. You're behind the steering wheel of Thunder Master, a four-wheel-drive vehicle equipped with tripple turbo engine and an arsenal of sophisticated weaponry. The object is to blast a path through enemy territory avoiding mines, hidden bunkers, helicopters and tanks. The action is somewhat akin to *Roadblasters*. Out soon on Commodore 64/128, Spectrum, Amstrad CPC, Atari ST, Amiga, IBM PC formats.

After **Tynesoft**'s ***Winter Olympiad*** comes, naturally enough, ***Summer Olympiad*** featuring five events – Skeet Shooting, Fencing, Hurdles,



Summer Olympiad – Atari ST screen

Tripple Jump and High Diving. The whole package should be ready for a July release to tie in suitably with this year's Olympic Games.

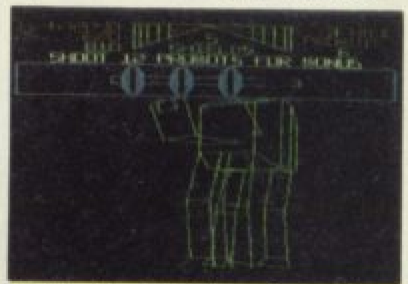
Says Development Manager **David Crofts**, 'We've tried to throw a new angle into each event, depicting them differently from the usual sports simulation. For example, the hurdles event is viewed from behind the runner so the track comes hurtling towards the player.'

Planned formats are Commodore 64/128, Spectrum, Amstrad CPC, Atari ST, Amiga and IBM PC.

Tynesoft also has some US film licences, first being ***Superman***, which is in development here and over in the States. You should be able to see it at the PC Show, Earl's Court, in September; release for all popular formats in November.

AT-AT ATTACK

DOMARK ***landed a lucky deal with Star Wars*****, because they got all three blockbuster Lucas films thrown in. The second in the trilogy, due for July,** ***The Empire Strikes Back*** (Spectrum, Amstrad CPC, Commodore, BBC, Atari ST and Amiga) is also licensed from Atari's coin-op as was *Star Wars*. It's a one-player game controlling Luke Skywalker's snowspeeder and later Han Solo's Millenium Falcon. Split into four levels, the first is a



Walking the AT-AT is no fun for the Rebel Alliance – Spectrum

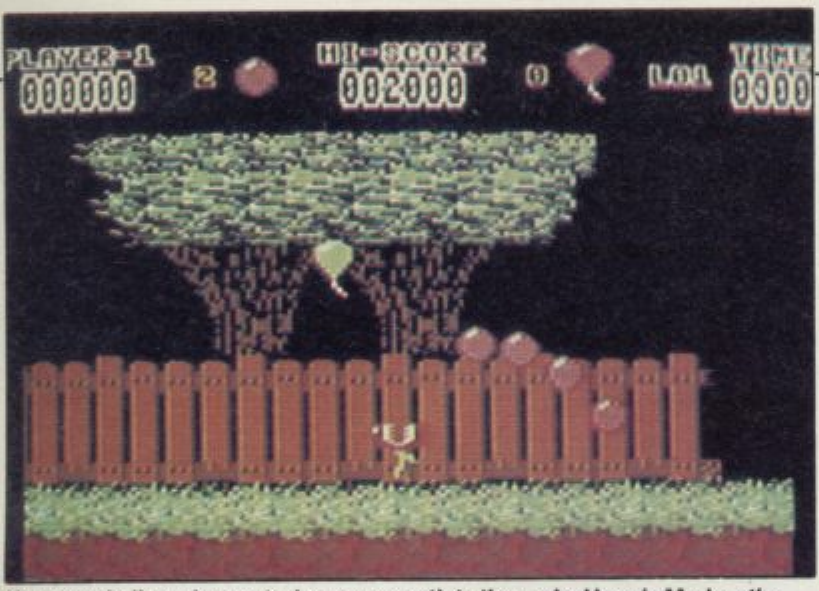
battle on the planet Hoth, then a battle against the AT-AT and AT-ST walkers, followed by a jaunt in Millenium Falcon fighting against a swarm of Tie fighters. Finally the asteroid belt approaches, you fly through it to reach your objective – the asteroid planet. ***The Empire Strikes Back*** is displayed in vector graphics like *Star Wars* and programmed, funnily enough, by **Vektor Grafix**.

ONE P'TAITO, TWO P'TAITO

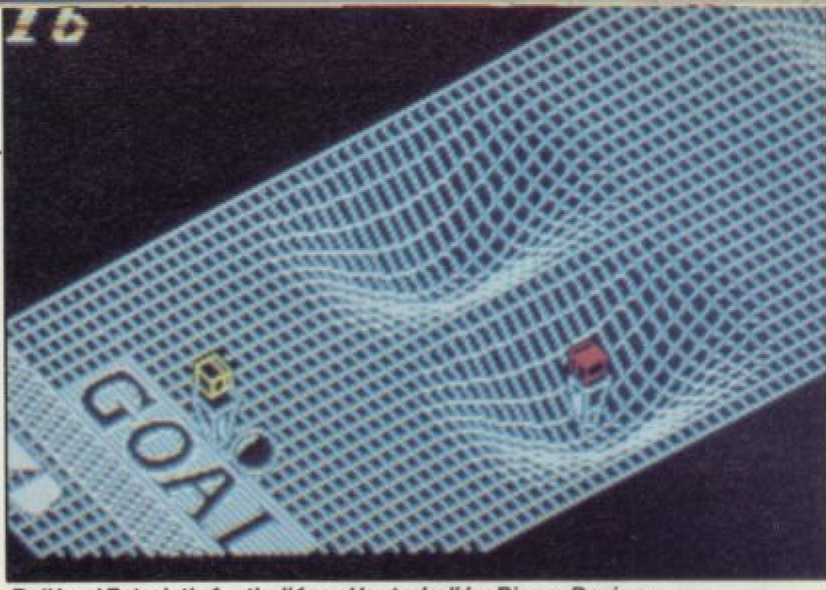
OCEAN'S conversion of Taito's ***Operation Wolf***, we previewed last month for 8-bit formats, so here's the ST version. The graphics have been taken directly from the arcade machine – as you can see from the screen shot, they're impressive. The game itself is a six-stage target shoot-'em-up and is set for a September release. Also on the Ocean/Taito front is the forthcoming ST conversion of ***Arkanoid II: Revenge Of Doh***, a great 8-bit game. Both will cost £19.95.

Bouncing back from the Taito coin-op, here comes **Revenge Of Doh**





Keep your balls under control as you negotiate the park – **Hoppin Mad** *on the Commodore 64*

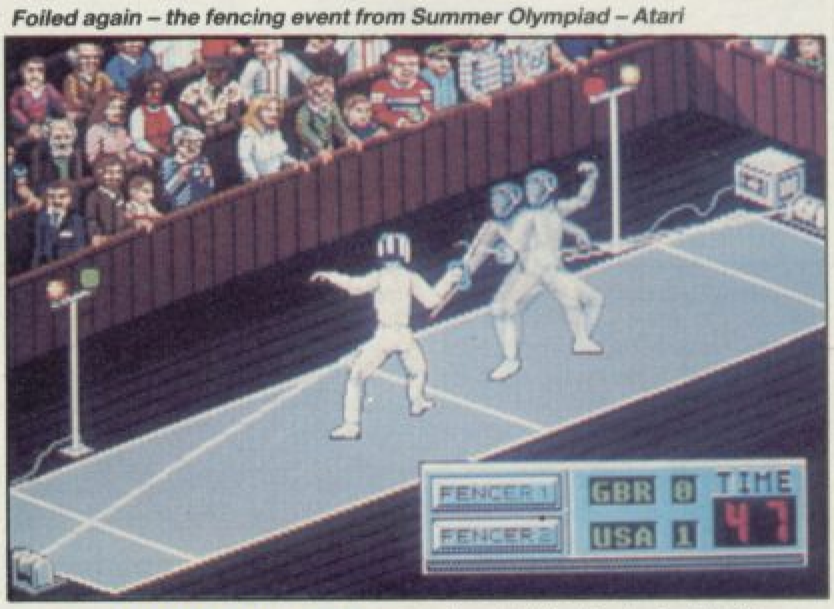


Roll 'em! Futuristic football from Vectorball by Binary Design – Amstrad screen



One of the 110 graphic locations from Lankhor's adventure thriller, **No**

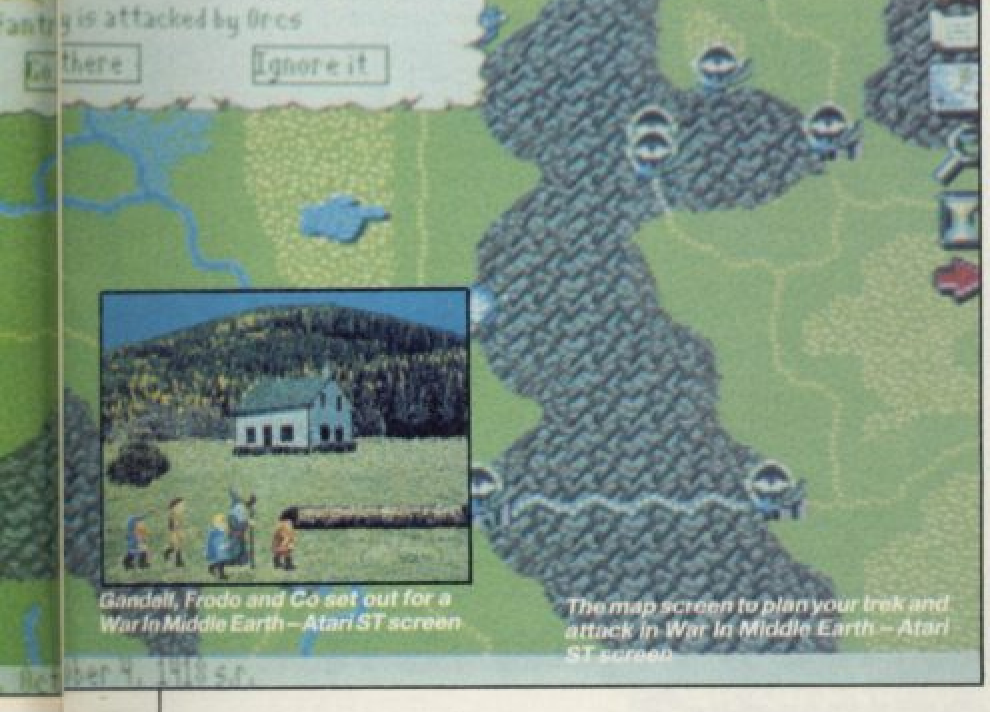
Foiled again – the fencing event from Summer Olympiad – Atari





Axe wielding Barbarian II strikes a blow to a prehistoric enemy – Amiga screen

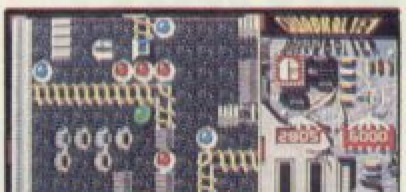
Down in Drax's dungeons, Barbarian leaps skillfully over a monster pit – Commodore screen shot



Gandalf, Frodo and Co set out for a War In Middle Earth – Atari ST screen

The map screen to plan your trek and attack in War In Middle Earth – Atari ST screen

Nuclear reactions from Logotron, Quadralien – Atari ST



With graphics taken directly from the Taito arcade machine, **Operation Wolf** *is looking snaz*



THE GAMES MACHINE REPORT



The AMS DTP Solution kit

AMS touts low-cost DTP pack

MOUSE manufacturer AMS has launched 'the first mass-market desktop-publishing (DTP) package' for PC-XT and AT compatibles.

Managing Director Nick Pearson said *DTP Solution* – which comprises a mouse, handheld scanner and *Finesse* DTP software at £447.35 – will allow more people to use DTP, which up till now has been the expensive preserve of larger businesses.

DTP software such as AMS's *Finesse* allows users to design pages of text and pictures onscreen, placing them in multiple columns like a magazine – whereas most word-processing packages will only produce text that prints in a single column across the page, like a book.

The text is written on a word processor such as MicroPro's *Wordstar* and the finished file is then 'imported' into the DTP program; there's no retyping.

The DTP software can also produce different styles and sizes of type for use in headlines and so on. *Finesse* has three basic type styles which can be used in sizes from 6 point – this big to 72 point, which is about an inch high.

Like most popular DTP packages, *Finesse* is described as WYSIWYG – 'what you see is what you get', meaning that the page appears onscreen exactly as it will be printed.

And, again like most of its peers, *Finesse* is controlled with a mouse which selects commands from onscreen options Apple Macintosh-style, rather than keyboard input.

The AMS Serial Mouse supplied in the *DTP Solutions* package was the firm's first major product, and Pearson says it sells around 3,000 per month.

The handheld AMS Microscan scanner is used to scan images – photographs, cartoons, charts etc – turn them into digital data which the PC can handle and put them on the monitor screen, where they can be fitted into a page and printed out.

It produces black-and-white pictures with a resolution of 200 dots per inch, from colour or black-and-white originals. The scanner's head is 105mm wide – just over 4 inches – which means images wider than that have to be scanned in sections, which can create problems.

DTP Solution compares well on cost with its competitors, though versatile PC DTP software can be obtained for as little as £68.95 (Polyrom's oft-recommended *NewsMaster*), and Epson's Image Scanner for £224.25 – both those products cost less than their AMS counterparts.

On their own, *Finesse* is £113.85, the AMS Serial Mouse with the software it needs is £79.35 and the AMS Microscan with its software is £286.35.

DTP Solution runs on the IBM PC-XT and AT and 100% compatibles. And for good-looking results you'll also need a laser printer, which can cost anything from £316.25 (the Epson LX-800) to the earth.

All prices in this article include VAT.

AMS (Advanced Memory Systems): *Warrington* (0925) 413501

Powerplay's new tough Joysticks

YOU NEED a reliable joystick to win in today's difficult-to-master games, and PowerPlay reckon they have the tools for the job of eliminating marauding aliens with two new joysticks.

Both joysticks complement PowerPlay's successful Cruiser range, in fact Cruiser Black *is* the original design except for its totally black casing and ergonomically flat-topped stick. The second, Cruiser Clear, is housed in a clear case and has autofire when one of the two fire buttons is held down.

All three are British produced (apart from the Atari plugs) and feature a solid steel rod in the centre of the stick and sensitive but robust microswitches. Over 25,000 units of the Cruiser original have been sold and to date only 50 have been found faulty.

The Cruiser Original and Black retail (VAT inclusive) for £9.99, the Clear sells for £12.99. More information and orders can be obtained by writing to **PowerPlay, *Unit 2, Rothersthorpe Avenue Trading Estate, Northampton NW4 9JH*.**

Power in play from the Cruiser range



Cyberpunk wave gets into overdrive

COINCIDENTAL with this month's cyberpunk feature (page 101) is the release of *Mona Lisa Overdrive*, the concluding part in William Gibson's highly acclaimed cyberspace 'sequence' – the other books being *Neuromancer* and *Count Zero*. The new book takes characters from the preceding, apparently unconnected novels and adds some new ones – such as the daughter of Yakuza crimelord – to produce an exceptionally original trilogy. Price is £10.95 in Victor Gollancz hardback, with the preceding books now out as Grafton paperbacks.

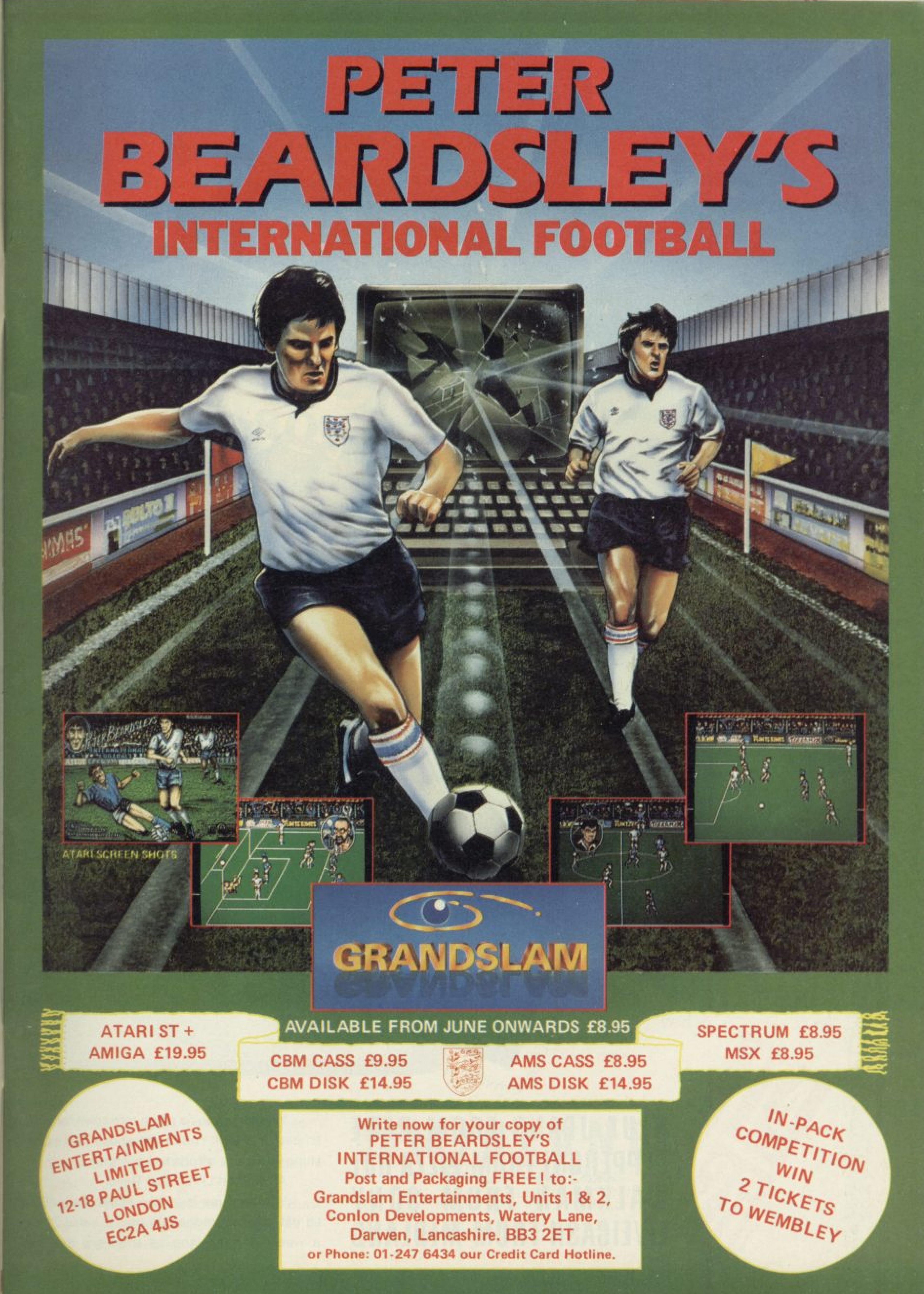
In Hollywood meanwhile it has been announced that the film version of *New Rose Hotel*, (a short story from Gibson's *Burning Chrome* anthology), is to be directed by Kathryn Bigelow. Her last movie was the controversial *Near Dark* which provided an exceptionally stylish reworking of the vampire mythology. Filming is due to begin this autumn with most principal photography taking place in Japan. The film's score is to be done by Malcolm McClaran, the former Sex Pistols' manager.

Whose show is it anyway?

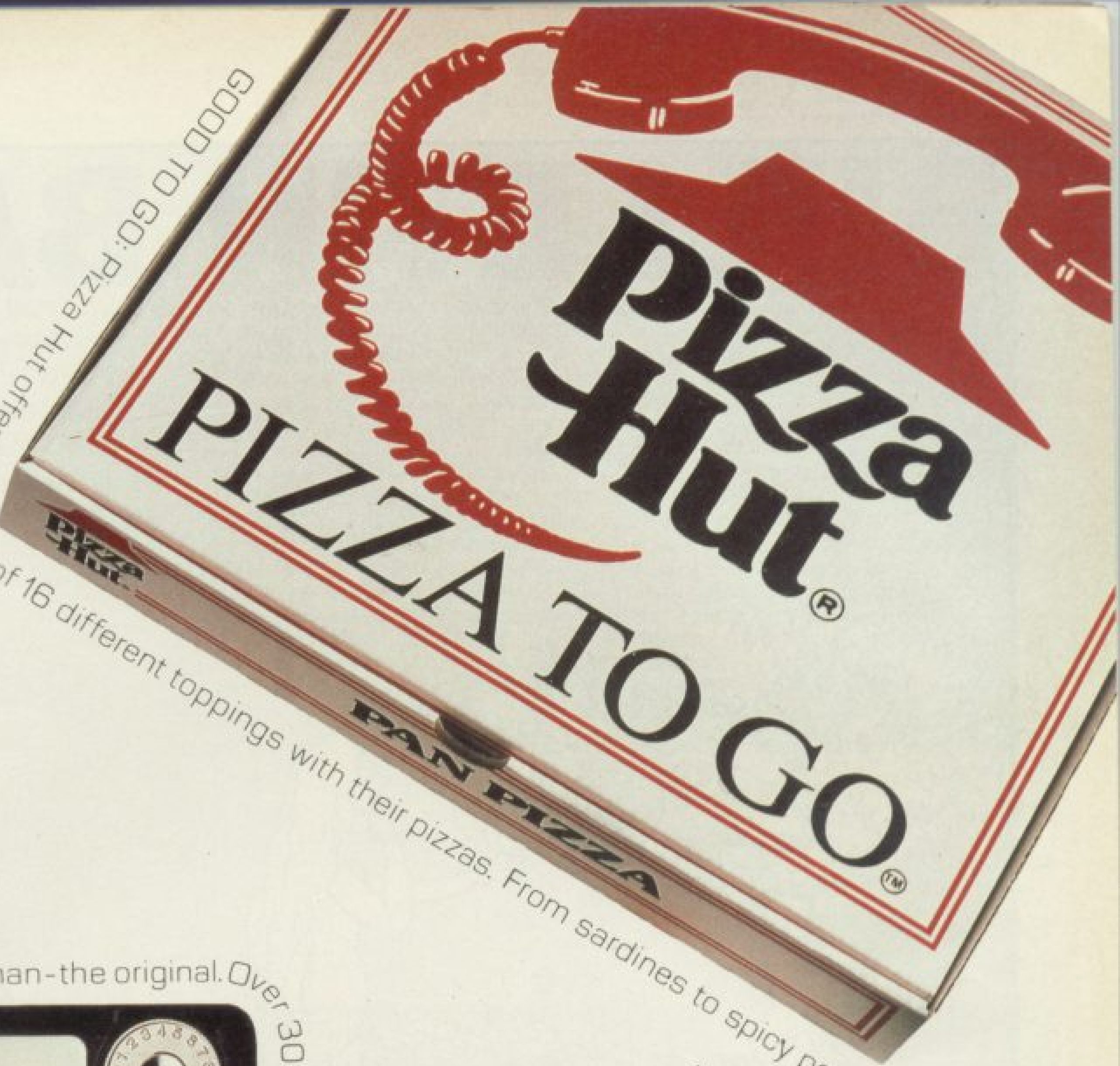
Commodore Business Machines (UK) is announcing satisfactory sales figures for the Amiga range of computers internationally – some 40,000 units in Britain, 600,000 worldwide. But arguments as to who is doing best in the United States have been solved by the composition of this year's CES (Computer and Electronics Show) in Chicago.

Nintendo of America Inc have not only taken over most of the hotel rooms where the show is held, but so many of the exhibition stands – which they sublet to third-party software publishers – that the standing joke in Chicago is that the CES is appearing at the Nintendo Show.

Marshal T Rosenthal is in Chicago now for the show, and will be reporting in full in next month's issue.


PETER BEARDSLEY'S
INTERNATIONAL FOOTBALL
ATARI SCREEN SHOTS
GRANDSLAM
AVAILABLE FROM JUNE ONWARDS £8.95
ATARI ST +
AMIGA £19.95
CBM CASS £9.95
CBM DISK £14.95
AMS CASS £8.95
AMS DISK £14.95
SPECTRUM £8.95
MSX £8.95
GRANDSLAM ENTERTAINMENTS LIMITED
12-18 PAUL STREET
LONDON
EC2A 4JS
Write now for your copy of
PETER BEARDSLEY'S
INTERNATIONAL FOOTBALL
Post and Packaging FREE! to:-
Grandslam Entertainments, Units 1 & 2,
Conlon Developments, Watery Lane,
Darwen, Lancashire. BB3 2ET
or Phone: 01-247 6434 our Credit Card Hotline.
IN-PACK
COMPETITION
WIN
2 TICKETS
TO WEMBLEY





GOOD TO GO: Pizza Hut offer a choice of 16 different toppings with their pizzas. From sardines to spicy pork.

MUSIC ON THE MOVE: Sony Walkman–the original. Over 30 million sold worldwide.





CASH IN A FLASH: Midland LIVE!Cash can be used at over 3,000 cash dispensers throughout the UK.

balance of £20 in your account, you'll earn a good rate of interest.

If you are aged 14-20, you can open a LIVE!Cash account.

Just call in at your nearest Midland Bank and fill in an application form. Or call free on 0800 400 469 for written details.

MIDLAND
The Listening Bank

LIVE! CASH 14 20

BULLETIN BAWDY

The passion for Bulletin Boards is hotting up – and it's passion that's running riot. But, as Mel Croucher uncovers, the lush undergrowth of tangled passion flowers hides some nasty beasts



If prostitution is 'the oldest profession', then advertising such forbidden fruit is the second oldest. Since the Serpent pinned up a notice reading 'old devil wishes to meet naked women to swap knowledge in exchange for apple' bulletin boards haven't changed much, although today we are more likely to make use of a telephone plugged into an Apple.

Discreet little clay notices have been found in the petrified ruins of ancient Pompeii which translate along the lines 'strict nanny for discipline', 'French polishing given' and 'private massage service available from willing slaves'. Excavations on the island of Crete have unearthed 3,000-year-old bulletin boards offering the services of mercenary soldiers, houris advertised their favours in Persia by displaying erotic statues in their doorways and in old Cathay there was a highly organised system of intimate escort agencies catering for all tastes.

In 1962, the Bell Telephone Corporation of America were looking for ways to entice subscribers to spend even more hours running up their phone bills, and came up with the notion of something called The Private Party-line. Human nature being what it is, these dial-a-heavy-breather services soon degenerated into a mass market for lonely hearts, sex-starved singles and unsavoury perverts. In 1973, the US Telecommunications Authority tried, and failed, to control so-called *specialist* services, where callers could dial up a whole range on one-to-one conversations and talk dirty.

Here in the good old United Kingdom, we didn't catch on until the Eighties, with services like the headline-hitting **Party-Line** and **Talkabout**. If you dial up any of the more 'specialist' services today, you are more than likely to be conned into listening to a recorded message. Corrine Russel (the *Vixen* girl) tells me that when she takes part in the 'Dial a Page-Three Girl' phone lines, far from whispering erotic naughtiness into the caller's earholes, all you get is a prerecorded interview of her burbling on about her favourite things, 'I'm on the cusp of Scorpio and Sagittarius, and I love wearing black . . . ' (yawn).

It is only when telephones are connected to computer modems that things really start to get intriguing. The computerised bulletin board is fast becoming the favourite market place for advertising dubious taste.

When you rub your modem up against an exotic stranger, with nothing between you except several hundred miles of cable and the phone bill, sometimes, just sometimes gentle reader, wonderful things happen in your search for true love, eternal happiness and the odd bit of sex. Once upon a time – and this is no fairy story – *Deputy Dawg* was all alone in his sparse bedroom, trawling for companionship in the deep waters of Prestel's Micronet 800, when he met the girl of his dreams, the one and only *Busy Lizzie*. Electronic romance blossomed, and before many nights had passed, declarations of love were pasted all over the bulletin boards. When they met in the flesh, to coin a phrase, *Deputy Dawg* and *Busy Lizzie* made two important decisions. One: they decided to get married. Two: they promptly cancelled their Micronet subscriptions! This is by no means an isolated incident. A few weeks ago *Jhary the Wizard* married *The Vampire Enchantress* as a direct result of trying to murder one another on several occasions. They met through the cult roleplaying game *Shades* (TGM**001**), and if rumours are to be believed they can make the Earth move simply by teleporting to another planet and blowing it up.



The computerised bulletin board is fast becoming the favourite market place for advertising dubious taste.

But for every tale of happiness that I have come across, there are a hundred incidents of deceit, corruption, and criminal incitement. It gives me no pleasure to report that festering away deep down among the bulletin boards there are some highly unpleasant pits: ranging from Nazi propaganda in West Germany, organised racism in the States, child prostitution in France, and gay-bashing in Britain.

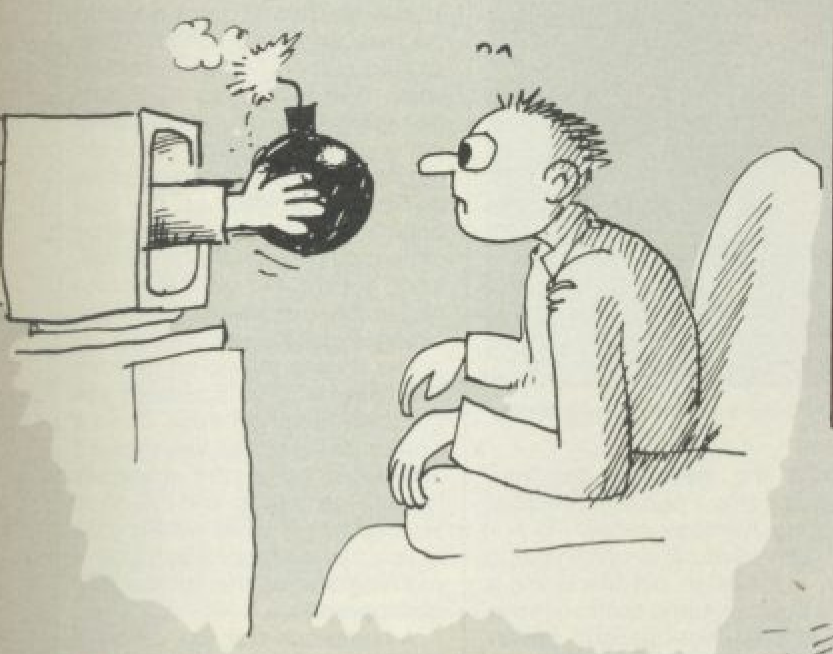
John Wallbridge is the founder of the Bulletin Board Association of Great Britain, and he has recently been quoted as saying: 'They can be abused, but I would hate to see them singled out for censorship. They are largely used by teenagers and they are prey to all sorts of harmful influences. It's hard to say what people might get up to.'

As a matter of fact, Mr Wallbridge, it's not hard at all to say what people

might get up to. It's dead easy. And what is more, there is precious little that anyone can do about it. British Telecom are responsible under Section 43 of the Telecommunications Act of 1984 to inform the police when they discover *'a person who sends a message or other matter that is grossly offensive, indecent, obscene or menacing'*. But when a group of paedophiles (that's people who promote sex with children) were busted for using a bulletin board of contact lists for illegal sex with kids, the police were 'unable to take action'.

There are three main reasons for not being able to control such uses of bulletin boards. One, users are often anonymous; two, you can say anything you like on a private line between consenting adults; three, nobody has got the time or money to monitor the damn things.

. . . within Desire callers are positively encouraged to transmit the electronic equivalent of lavatory wall graffiti.



Recently, *The Observer* newspaper uncovered a particularly nasty mollusc under a particularly nasty stone. His name is **Darren Ingram**, and his bulletin board services is named Corrupt Computing, operating out of his mum's house in Brookside Avenue, Coventry. A selfconfessed hater of gays, 18-year-old Darren has already provided the following services for anyone with a modem: how to stop the emergency services from getting to the scene of an accident, the Top Ten ways to kill a cop, how to firebomb 'jerks at school', how to shoplift, how to make nitroglycerine and how to make riot shields 'really f***ing burn.' Now young Darren will say that all this information can be found in public libraries, but old Mel will reply that libraries do not have two-way conversations that encourage children to kill people and send money 'to help corrupt'.

Overseas, bulletin boards have slotted in to the traditional hobbies of the natives. Throughout the USA the White-Supremacist morons of the Ku Klux Klan are recruiting kids via bulletin board networks to racial hatred against blacks. They are protected by cleverly shielded closed user groups and Big Money. In West Germany neo-Nazi groups are infesting bulletin boards with propaganda against Jews, blacks and homosexuals. In France the state-run Mintel viewdata service has been successfully adopted by prostitutes selling their wares, including both male and female persons under the legal age of consent.

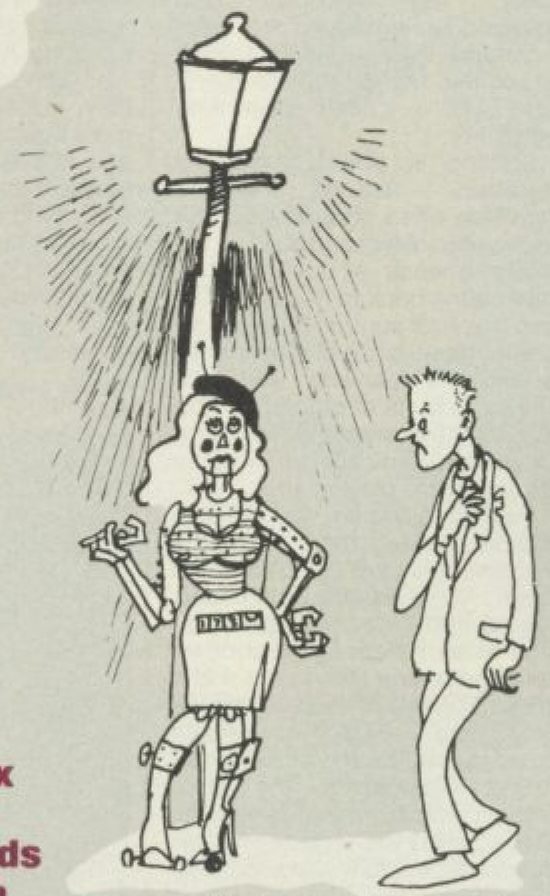
The Ku Klux Klan are recruiting kids via bulletin board net-works to racial hatred against blacks.

I spent a night checking out two British chatline options, the Telemap network known as **Teletalk**, and the open-to-all-comers network advertised as **Desire**. I logged on for exactly the same amount of time, I had exactly the same conversations using exactly the same vocabulary and then I checked up on who was monitoring my private conversations. Now I don't give a monkey's about what both of these outfits print on their rate cards of charges, and how they advertise their services, this is what happened for real:

As for the monitoring aspect, **Teletalk** does indeed have some shady grey ghosts overseeing what goes on, but as the amount of traffic increases monitoring becomes unworkable. However, there are a number of real safeguards in the system. Firstly, paying subscribers are supposed to be over 18, secondly conversations are selfmonitoring, and whoever is 'in charge' of a private location or conference or chat has the ability to throw out any participant who gets abusive or obscene.

With **Desire** things are different. The whole marketing strategy concerns the exploitation of young people's loneliness and some mythical quest for immediate real friendships. Indeed, there is a specific location within **Desire** where callers are positively encouraged to transmit the electronic equivalent of lavatory wall graffiti.

	TELETALK	DESIRE
COST	av. £3.80p per hour	av. £18.90 per hour
PASSWORD REQUIRED	YES	NO
NOTICEBOARD FACILITY	YES	YES
PRIVACY	AVAILABLE IF REQUIRED	NOT ENCOURAGED
'SERIOUS' CONVERSATIONS	ABOUT 40%	ABOUT 10%
DIRTY WORDS RECEIVED	A FEW	A GREAT MANY
DIRTY WORDS SENT	THROWN OUT OF LOCATION	NO RESPONSE
ADVICE ON PREGNANCY	GIVEN A PHONE NUMBER	GIVEN A PHONE NUMBER
ADVICE ON DRUGS	LINE DISCONNECTED	GIVEN A PHONE NUMBER
REQUEST FOR LEGAL SEX	APPOINTMENT MADE	NO RESULT
REQUEST FOR ILLEGAL SEX	LINE DISCONNECTED	LINE DISCONNECTED
REQUEST FOR FIREARMS	LINE DISCONNECTED	MISUNDERSTOOD
REQUEST FOR PENPAL	THROWN OUT OF LOCATION	YES



I suppose that various readers will conclude totally different attractions or repulsions to that little analysis, depending on your proclivities, but nobody can argue with the phone charges whereby one night of fruity conversation could leave you bankrupt!

But these commercial bulletin boards are pretty harmless stuff, it is the private networks where most of the danger festers. Fortunately, computing has given birth to our very own guardians of justice as well as our very own outlaws; the hackers. In February of this year, a group of Dutch hackers working for the **Green** network got so incensed by bulletin boards offering weapons and weapons training that they blew its tiny silicon mind by patching it into the local police HQ.

Multinationals have also had their noses tweaked. Last Christmas, an IBM employee got so frustrated with the garbage floating around the corporate bulletin boards that she seeded a neat little worm into the system. The worm appeared as a Christmas Card on her boss's monitor, and at the same time sucked in his entire contact list. It then replicated itself to that list, sucking in all of their contacts, and spreading seasonal cheer throughout the planet. Unconfirmed rumours from within IBM suggest that the system broke down totally in West Germany, and was reduced to a crawl here in the UK. I sincerely hope that that's no fairy tale. In the meantime, to *Deputy Dawg* and *Busy Lizzie*, and to *Jhary the Wizard* and *The Vampire Enchantress*, may you have every happiness, and may the blessings of the bulletin board bring you never-ending multiple . . .

LINE DISCONNECTED, SWINE HASN'T PAID HIS PHONE BILL . . .

COIN-OP CONFRONTATION

Bleeding dry THE GAMES MACHINE's petty cash box, Robin Hogg feeds Blackpool coin-slots in a doomed attempt to keep them quiet

NEWS SLOT

BOLTED-ON GLASSES will provide thrills soon, as the UK coin-op scene is taken by storm with the latest **Taito** racing game. It's called ***Continental Circus*** and uses a pair of 3-D glasses fixed to the cabinet to correct the 3-D effect on screen. Away from the freeway and back to Grand Prix circuits, it's an impressive game in play, with great sound FX and loads of graphical treats. 3-D glasses aren't new, but rarely have they graced a game this good. Does this mean we will see a wholly new type of coin-op emerging next year?

But success breeds problems, and **Taito** has had its share, worst recently with counterfeit copies of the shoot-'em-up ***Operation Wolf*** going by the name of ***Operation Bear***. Taito has already taken legal action against one European company as a result. It isn't the first time Taito has suffered in this way, illegal copies were made of ***Rastan Saga*** and ***Kick And Run***.

SNK are soon releasing ***Fighting Soccer*** – not a coin-op about hooligans, but the fast and furious sport itself. Two other cabinets to look for are **Capcom**'s ***F1 Dream*** – entering arcades now – and **Sega**'s ***Hot Rod***, which should be on playtest in major arcades around the UK soon.

VULCAN VENTURE

Konami

Nemesis smashed arcades in 1985 – a success phenomenal. *Salamander* followed the year later, further advancing the *Nemesis* cause, with dual-player action, horizontally-scrolling screens and some later-level motherships which even now give some coin-ops a run for their money. Third in the series, *Vulcan Venture*, is now upon us.

It continues from where the others left off, with the Vulcan spacecraft. To provide some variation in gameplay, the start screen offers players a choice of varied armament to build up in the game; the *Nemesis* and *Salamander* armouries are there together with a new set containing torpedoes, rear-firing lasers, and other death-dispensing weaponry.

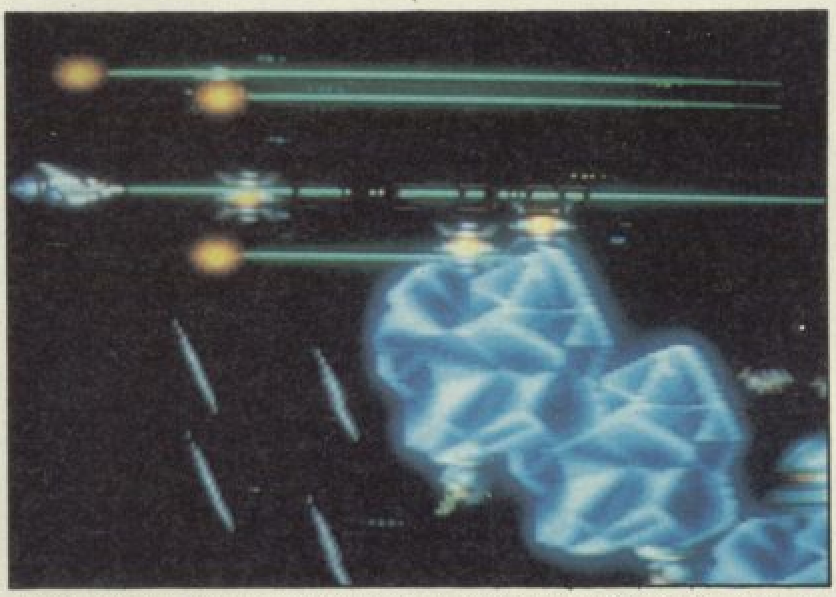
Starting in space, aliens fly onscreen, leaving behind capsules when shot. Collect the capsules to select and build up the ship's arsenal. All fairly routine stuff dating back to *Nemesis*. The ship flies past suns as *Salamander* worms burst forth, turning circles around the player's ship and posing all sorts of problems. This level is rather simple but employs movement vertically to increase the size of the playing area.

Past suns and fire worms, alien attacks cease, then, with the machine shouting 'shoot it in the head!', the end-of-level Phoenix comes into view. Very pretty to look at as it flaps up and down spitting fire and lasers, but that's about all. Blow its head off and it's onto Level 2 – graphics straight out of the nightmares of HR Giger. Aliens pounce at the ship, biomechanical growths have to be blasted away to progress and gun positions generally provide much hassle.

Similar to the second stage in previous games, losing a life here (and all collected weapons) means you might as well say goodbye to getting any further (without resorting to the continue-play feature). This game shows no mercy!

The action continues through zones containing giant ice asteroids crashing together, a space fortress of narrow corridors, twisting passageways and rapidly closing blastdoors to name but a few of the deviously-designed hazards that are part and parcel of Konami's *Nemesis* series.

Vulcan Venture is unoriginal in play, but like an old friend it's a more than welcome coin-op in this age of beat-'em-ups and never-ending race games. Packed with everything: great graphics, superb sound and second-to-none arcade action, *Vulcan Venture* is a worthy sequel despite the lack of any significant progress in gameplay.



Battling through the ice asteroid zone in **Vulcan Venture** *with lasers and bombs unleashed left, right and centre*

KAGEKI

Taito

Looking for novelty in the over-subscribed beat-'em-up genre, *Kageki* is slightly different from the norm in using a higher viewpoint of the action, and it's set in an enclosed alleyway complete with other opponents watching.

You take the good-guy role, laying into rival gang members one at a time. Two screens make up the alleyway and fighters move around parrying blows, retreating when the going gets tough and delivering series of punches when the enemy is weakest. If you can get in a continuous volley of blows on your opponent as the bout begins, you stand a good chance of beating him. On the other hand, if you get stuck in a corner you can be literally pummelled senseless, which is a bit harsh in play.

The winner moves on to tackle the next, tougher opponent with the loser getting thrown down a bottomless pit. The graphics are amusingly done, the characters have large heads and do some strange things while watching the action (one bystander lobs a morning star at the fighters if he gets bored.)

A humorous coin-op, devoid of anything new, but it has got some nice touches and that helps make it worth a quick feed.

Thanks to Noel at the recently opened Oasis in Blackpool for the use of the machines.

Taito's beat-'em-up may not look anything new but it's fun and enjoyable to play

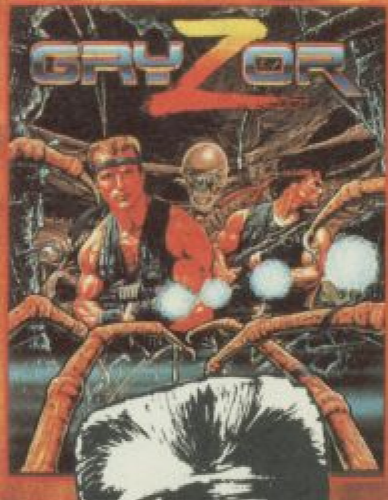



CAN YOU TACKLE THE HIGHER STRATEGY?
FOOTBALL MANAGER 2
Kevin Toms, inventor of the world's best selling football game says, "It beats my best seller – hands down"
New improved features include:– Spectacular graphics and tactics with unlimited action, more fun and excitement.
The press says "It's fantastic – another all time great."
The computer panel says "We were looking for improvements on Football Manager to be assured of a good game. We were surprised – it's outstanding! It's gold class!"
CBM 64/128 Cassette – £9.99
CBM 64/128 Disk –£14.99
Spectrum Cassette – £9.99
Spectrum +3 Disk –£14.99
Amstrad Cassette – £9.99
Amstrad Disk –£14.99
Amiga Disk –£19.99
Atari St Disk –£19.99
IBM PC Disk –£19.99
GO FOR GOLD! IT'S TOTALLY Addictive
FOOTBALL MANAGER 2
"Football Manager 2 is not just an improvement on Football Manager – it's the next generation!
GO FOR GOLD!
Screen shots from Atari St system.
Kevin Toms.
IT'S TOTALLY Addictive
*Addictive games is a division of:– Prism Leisure Corporation plc, Unit 1, Baird Road, Enfield, Middlesex EN1 1SJ.
Street Date: All formats June 17th



ACADEMY
RIVALRY
COMBAT SCHOOL
PLATOON
The first casualty of war is innocence.
PLATOON
Special boxed pack containing FREE film poster
and audio cassette of Smokey Robinson's "Trac
Capturing the intimidating mood of conflict wit
Platoon has been hailed as "Best Film Tie-In to
program has received brilliant reviews on all for
Lead your Platoon deep into enemy territory, yo
feel the humidity, sense the threatening danger
enounter the enemy and his many booby traps.
at your peril! Enemy soldiers lunge at you from
can find vital information. If you come out of th
© 1986 Hemdale Film Corporation. All Rights Re
COMBAT SCHOOL
Konami's arcade hit now for your home micro and already a No. 1 hit. Seven gruelling events featuring the Assault Course, Firing Range, Arm Wrestling and Combat with the instructor himself! Combat school throws down the challenge to the toughest of thoroughbred gamesters – but if you don't make the grade you're out!
© 1987 Konami
GAMES OF COMBAT,
16.7
COMBAT SCHOOL
SPECTRUM AMSTRAD
7·95 8·95
SPECTRUM COMMODORE
ALSO AVAILABLE ON
AMIGA & PC+ COMPATS.
PLATOON
9·95 SPECTRUM
COMMODORE
ASTRAD
Ocean Software Limited · 6 Central Street · Manches

UNGLE WARFARE



SCI-FI SURVIVAL





, g me picture
cks f my Tears
thin the jungle
da e" – the
rma s.
ou c n almost
rs a you
Ha ing found the underground maze of tunnels, enter
the murky waters within, but this is the only way you
is a ive, you'll be just one of the few!

ese ved.

GRYZOR

A superb conversion for your home micro of Konami's arcade blockbuster. Featuring all the game-play of the arcade original, Gryzor takes you into a thrilling alien world of force fields, fanatical guerillas and strange enemy defence systems – but you have the fire-power and maybe, with a 'little' skill, grit and split second timing, you can infiltrate the aliens' headquarters. Play Gryzor once and you'll be hooked!

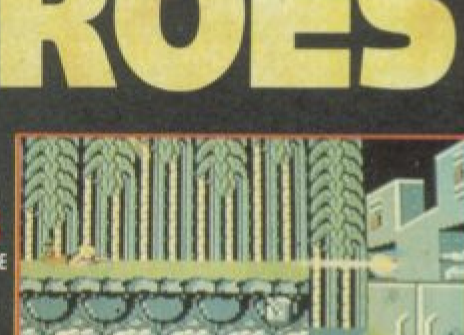
© 1987 Konami



FIT ONLY FOR HEROES



GRYZOR
SPECTRUM AMSTRAD
7·95 8·95
SPECTRUM COMMODORE
ALSO AVAILABLE ON
AMIGA & PC+ COMPATS.
PLATOON
IS ALSO AVAILABLE ON
ATARI ST, AMIGA &
PC+ COMPATIBLES



ster · M2 5NS · Telephone: 061 832 6633 · Telex: 669977



GET YOUR KICKS ON SIXTEEN BITS
Have you got what it takes
ROLLING THUNDER
undercover cop?
ROLLING THUNDER
BIONIC COMMANDOS
SHACKLED
IMPOSSIBLE MISSION II
U.S. GOLD
Screenshots taken from various 16 bit versions.
Got an ST??? Then, whatever you do, don't miss out on the latest great releases from U.S. Gold – all designed to make the most of the graphics capabilities and superb animation on your Atari ST. *Don't waste a moment – Get your kicks now!*
All titles £19.99 each
U.S. GOLD REFRESHES THE ATARI ST BITS OTHER GAMES CANNOT REACH!
U.S. Gold, Units 2/3 Holford Way, Holford, Birmingham B6 7AX. Tel: 021 356 3236

RIP UP THE ROAD IN . . .

BATTLECAR MARAUDER



Win your own Battlecar and games from HEWSON

BE MEAN, BE TOUGH

Play *Battlecar Marauder*, the next hot box from **Hewson**, and feel the power of burning rubber on a futuristic road. This vertically scrolling shoot-'em-up has you blasting invading forces from the earth and from the skies with laser cannon which seer through the battlefield.

Don't think you've seen it all before, *Battlecar Marauder* has that special sprinkle of **Hewson** magic; we're playing it at the moment – though you are obliged to wait until the next issue for the full story – and the TGM team is impressed. *Battlecar Marauder* is written by **Mark Kelly**, author of many a Commodore demo, with graphics by **Steve Crow** complemented by the music of **Barry Leitch** and **Dave Rodgers**.

WIN A CAR!

Well, a little one anyway. **Hewson** is stumping one of the latest radio-controlled cars as top prize – run over the cat's tail, leave tyre marks in the hamster, drive granny up the wall as you do the same with your own battlecar . . . hours of fun for all the family. In addition to the radio-controlled hamster flattener, the winner receives a copy of *Battlecar Marauder* on either the Commodore 64/128, Spectrum or Amstrad CPC. Not skimping on the prizes **Hewson** are supplying 30 runners up with a copy of the game, again on any of the three formats.

BATTLE BRAIN

Hordes of marauding brain cells? Good, you need them to answer the following incredibly difficult questions if you want to be in with a chance of winning a battlecar . . . or the game. Jot the answers down on a postcard or back of a sealed Dunlop and send them to: **MARAUDER COMP, THE GAMES MACHINE, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB*** to arrive no later than July 21 . . . and abide by the competition rules as detailed in the masthead.

WIN A RADIO-CONTROLLED CAR AND COPIES OF BATTLECAR MARAUDER FOR SPECTRUM, AMSTRAD OR COMMODORE 64/128

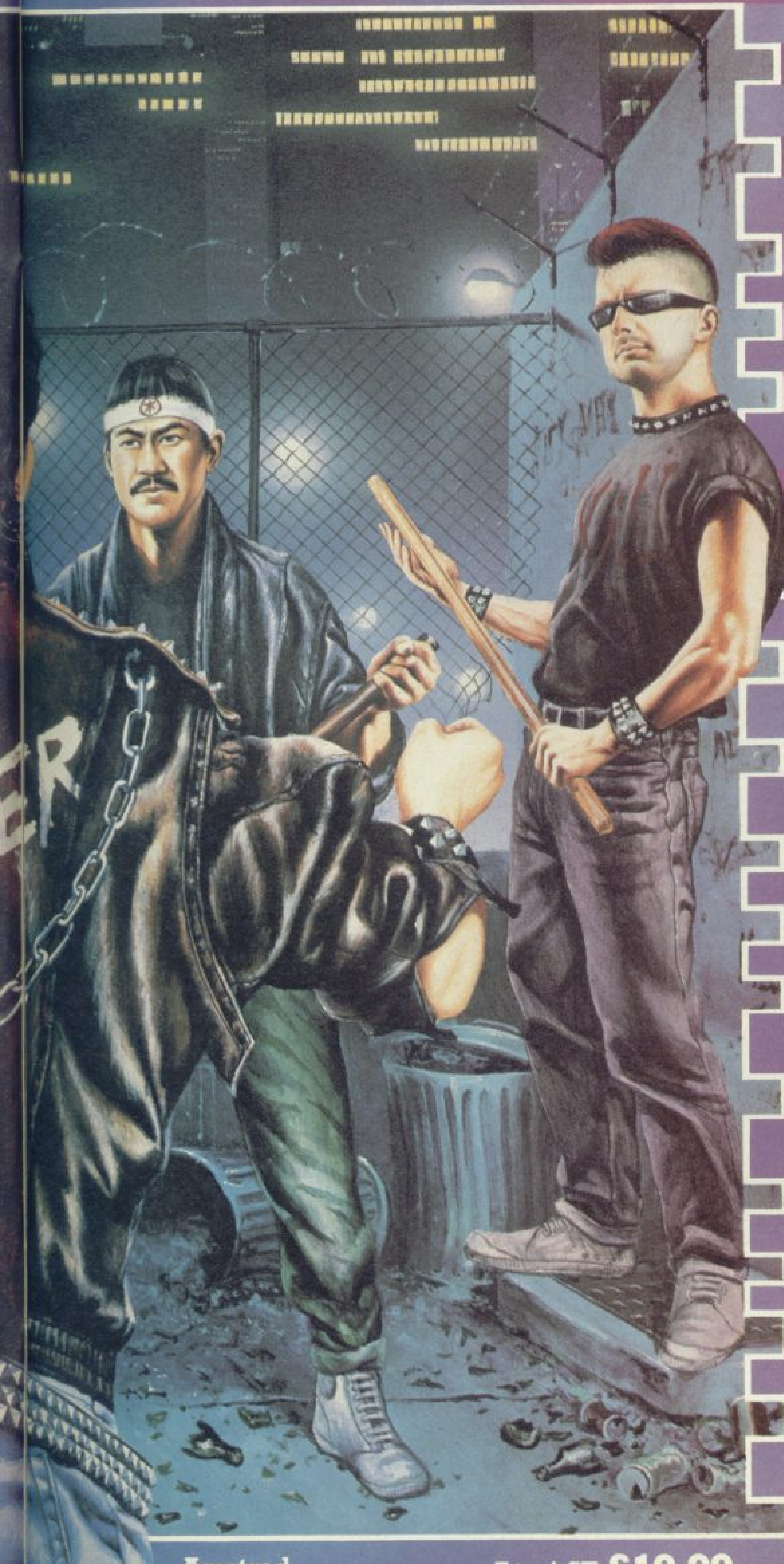
1: Which of these titles is not Hewson game?
a) Pyracurse
b) Exolon
c) US Gold's Greatest Hits

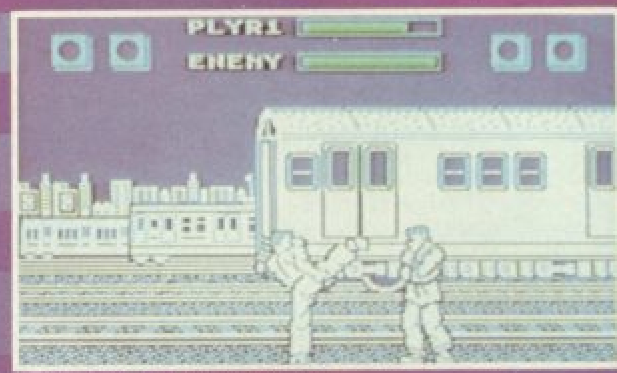
2: What is the surname of the company's Managing Director?
a) Hewson
b) Cousins
c) Barclay

3: Which game has Mark Kelly written before?
a) Captain Courageous
b) Out Run
c) Impossaball

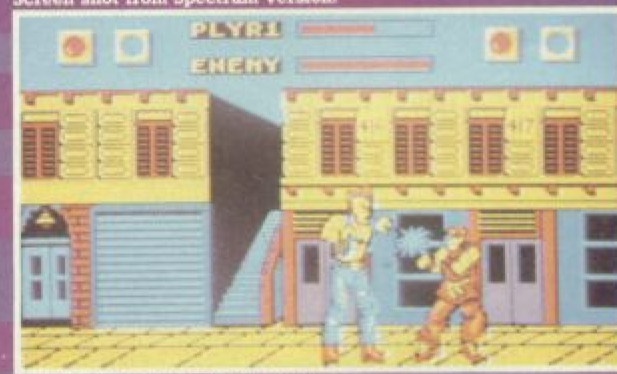

STREET FIGHTER™
....NOT
CBM 64/128
£9.99t - £14.99d
Spectrum 48K £8.99t
Spectrum +3 £12.99d

THING STANDS IN YOUR WAY





Screen shot from Spectrum version.



Screen shot from Amstrad version.


Screen shot from CBM 64/128 version.



Screen shot from Atari ST version.

EXPLOSIVE COIN-OP ACTION!

Battle your way across the globe taking on the mighty fighting power of 10 awesome exponents of hand to hand combat.

"A SINCLAIR CLASSIC"

"Thoroughly impressive combat game which knocks Renegade for 6. Go damage someone." *Sinclair User*

"It's fast, good looking and well hard" *Your Sinclair*

CAPCOM™

GIANTS OF THE VIDEO GAMES INDUSTRY

Amstrad
£9.99t - £14.99d

Atari ST £19.99d
Amiga £24.99d

GO! Media Holdings Ltd. A Division of U.S. Gold Ltd.
Units 2/3 Holford Way, Holford, Birmingham B6 7AX.
Tel: 021 356 3388.

THE CD-ROM

It may not be the fastest m
a second to fill a Spectrum
biggest portable means of
reusable disks soon availa
impli

Gksschlkksshksrsssllsshck!

Sound familiar? If you've ever been driven to distraction by an authentic golden oldies buff swooning over her authentically scratched and shredded 78s, think on this: in ten years' time your flickery, crashing old copy of *Out Run* could be just as tedious and *Knight Orc* could seem as short as a side of shellac.

It's all down to CD-ROM or, to make it gobbledygook, 'compact disk read-only memory' – essentially, plugging a compact disk (CD) player into your machine and loading software or reading data from a disk just like a music CD. Just as that inscrutably shiny little platter has already put nuance-perfect Dire Straits into a million mindless households, so the massive and virtually incorruptible memory of the CD is set to transform computers – every kind, from mainframes to micros, roomfuls to laptops.

For games-players this will eventually mean massive, detailed entertainment packages, with more levels and more intricacy than today's most sophisticated products; CD audio integrated with the game; and high-quality digitised photos (to illustrate adventures, perhaps.)

Or at least the potential will be there. So far CD-ROM has only proved valuable for producing large, rarely-updated databases – in effect, as a replacement for books. It's no vague philosophising that prompted Microsoft Press to name its standard work *CD-ROM: The New Papyrus*, as the book goes on to point out that these resilient face-sized disks (they measure 4.72" across) can each hold 250 'big books' – more precisely, over 650 million characters.

And the first major CD-ROM publication, *Groller's Academic American Encyclopaedia*, took up just a fifth of the disk space with its 9 million words.

But there's no reason why CD-ROM shouldn't carry software as well as reference data. Though mastering is expensive and it would take many person-months to program enough entertainment to fill a CD, reproducing CDs costs little more than copying floppy disks. Another attraction to software houses is that, because of the costs and the complex technology involved, casual CD-ROM piracy is almost impossible.

And CD-ROM readers are very similar to the audio CD players you find in the high street (they're sometimes even called CD-ROM players): a single cheap machine reading both audio and CD-ROM data is seen as likely. It will be just like a disk drive or tape recorder, but a lot faster – to compare it with one of today's slower beasts, CD-ROM will fill Spectrum +3 RAM in just under a second.

But because of the development costs, CD-ROM will remain the preserve of big-budget software houses; and only games with long periods of real recorded sound and complex graphics, perhaps digitised from real images, will be worth doing in the new technology.

A CD-ROM disk's 682 Mbyte memory capacity means it could store well over 5,000 of today's Spectrum games – and though programmers always want more memory than they're offered, nobody is likely to write games that long just yet, not even for Code Masters Plus. Even if they could, you'd end up with a 5,000-part multiload . . .

International electronics giants Philips and Sony, which started seriously developing CD-ROM in 1983 and published details of a standard physical format in 1985, envisaged it as a separate hardware. But then they, who had announced the standard for CD audio in 1980, had a vested interest in charging £200 twice for two different boxes.

Philips had already released a CD-ROM-only reader, the CM 100, for IBM PC compatibles. Within a year most major computer companies had taken an interest, ensuring that CD-ROM will not wilt as an overprotected flower of Philips/Sony.

The next step came in 1986, when 13 major firms including Microsoft (which produces the all-pervading MS-DOS operating system for IBM PCs), Apple and Hitachi agreed on a logical file format for CD-ROM – meaning that CD-ROM data can be read in any operating system.

One of these so-called High Sierra Group companies – American minicomputer manufacturer Digital Equipment Corporation – has recently put all its software on CD-ROM. Micro software firms like Electronic Arts are watching closely, too – interest is keen throughout the US, where CD-ROM players cost little more than their audio equivalents and there is even a CD-ROM magazine.

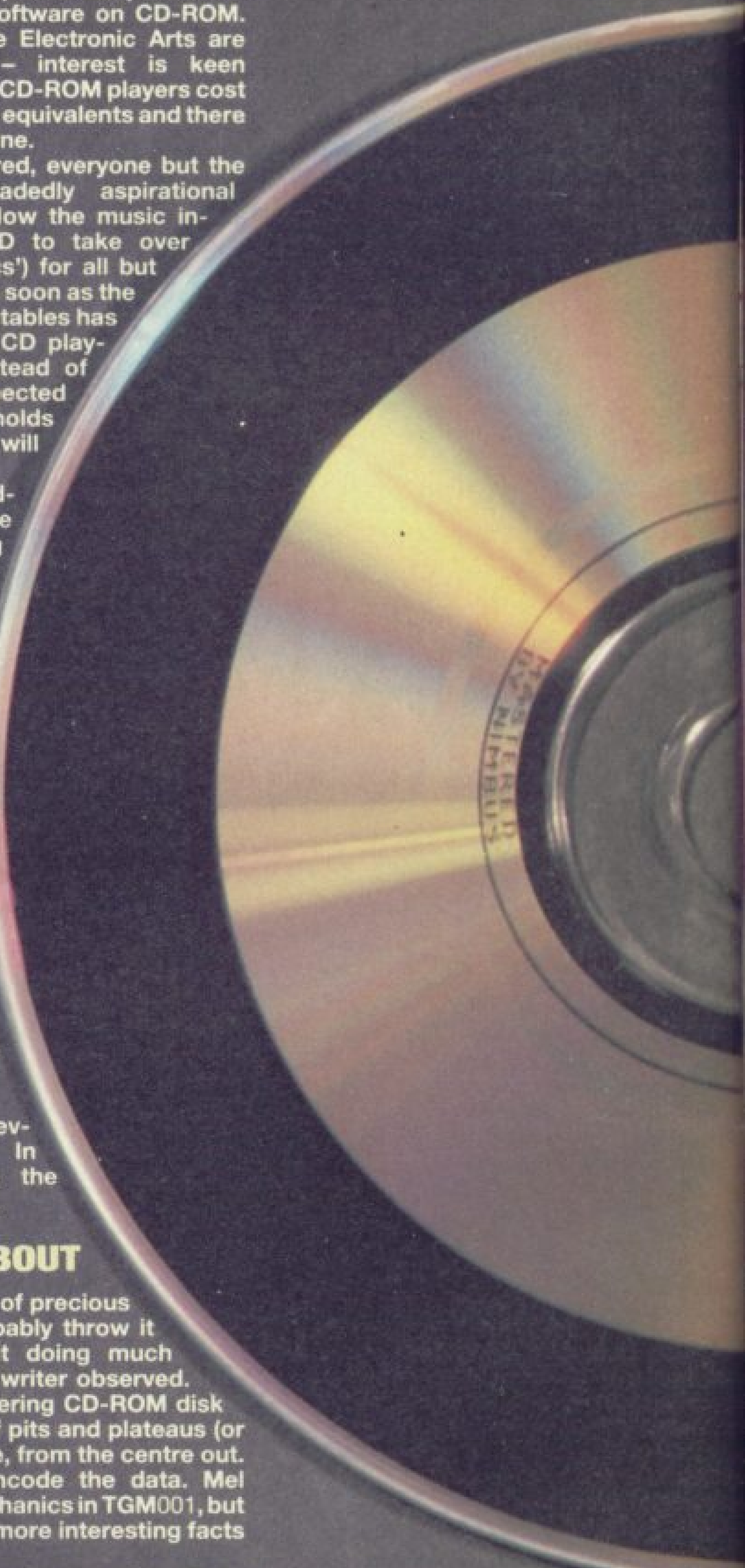
When audio CD appeared, everyone but the techies and the airheadedly aspirational treated it as a gadget. Now the music industry expects audio CD to take over from records ('black discs') for all but a few specialised titles, as soon as the present generation of turntables has died and everyone buys CD players as replacements instead of new turntables. It is expected that by 1990 all households with audio equipment will have a CD player.

CD-ROM appeared suddenly, out of the blue to the great computer-using public, making all those science fiction atmospherics about huge libraries and databases on a single screen, a single key away, seem suddenly plausible.

In 1980, Dire Straits CDs were the stuff of fantasy; by 1986 *Computer News* was describing the stars of the CD-ROM show as 'small, silver and about to take over the world'.

It happened so suddenly because there was no groundwork to be done – all that had happened in the service of the audio god, ever higher. fidelity.

In audio, CD was the revolution that happened. In computing, CD-ROM is the revolution that is about to.



3-MILE ROUNDABOUT

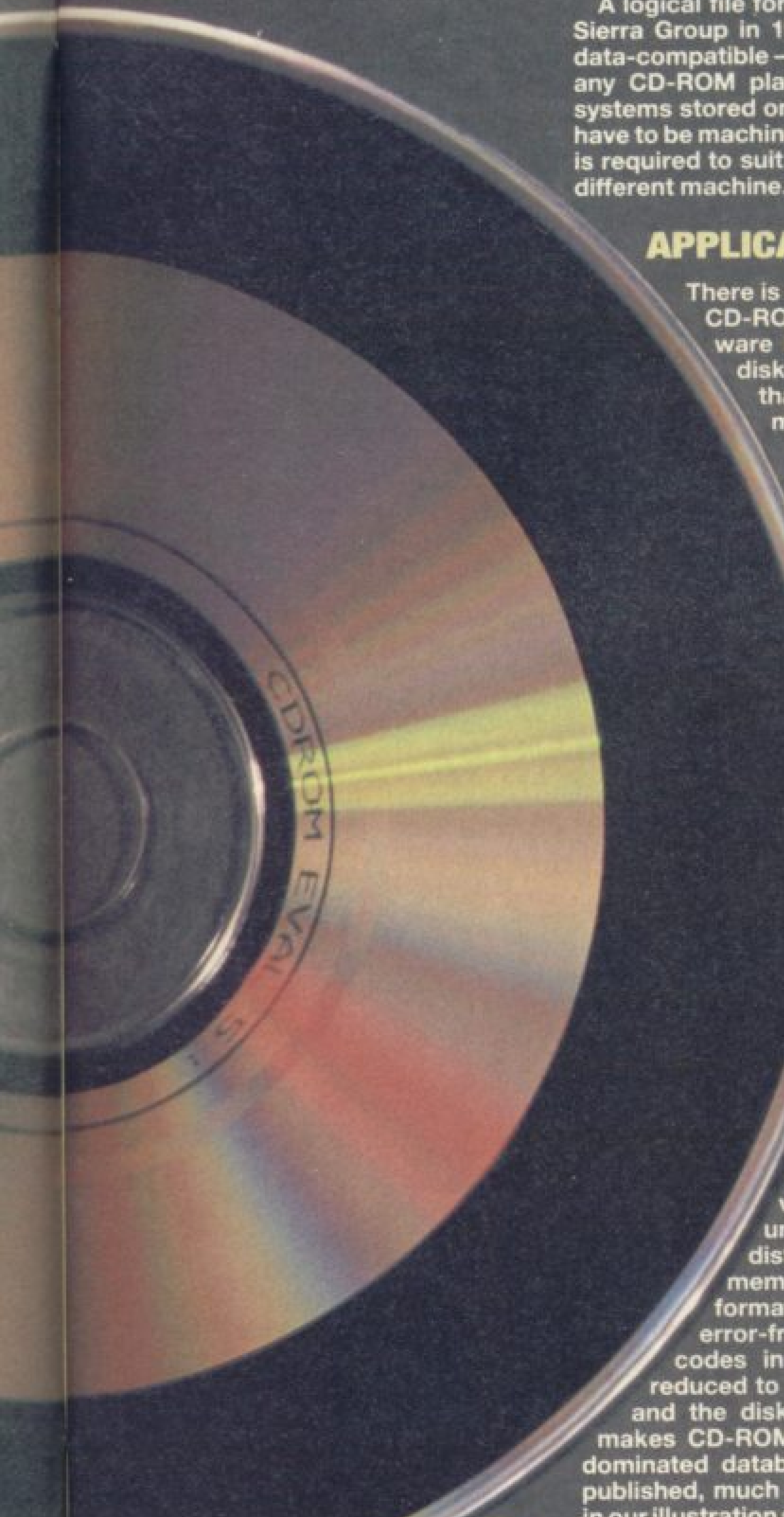
It may look like a Frisbee of precious metals, and you can probably throw it around the park without doing much harm – as one American writer observed. But the secret of the glittering CD-ROM disk is the 3-mile-long track of pits and plateaus (or lands) running on one side, from the centre out. These pits and lands encode the data. Mel Croucher covered CD mechanics in TGM001, but to recap – and add some more interesting facts – here's how it works:

The disk is read by a laser and a photo detector. The laser is focused on the track, and reflected by pits and lands at different angles. The photo detector senses these angles, and turns the sequence of pits and lands into binary data which a computer can use.

A CD-ROM disk can store up to 682 Mbytes (698,368K!) of data. But because the outer 5mm of the disk can be flawed and gets dirty easily, it

I REVOLUTION

medium – it would take almost
m+3 RAM – but CD-ROM is the
of data storage around, and with
lable, Barnaby Page looks at the
plications



is usually left blank (as you can see from the main picture). That makes the practical limit 553 megabytes (566,272K).

Data is read from the disk at 153.6K/second, but finding the right data ('seek time') can take more than half a second, making CD-ROM slower than most PC hard disks, say – though still speedier than floppies and gloriously faster than tape.

A logical file format standard set by the High Sierra Group in 1986 means all CD-ROMs are data-compatible – that is, they can all be read by any CD-ROM player. Software and operating systems stored on CD-ROM will, of course, still have to be machine-specific – a different version is required to suit the internal structure of each different machine.

APPLICATIONS

There is no entertainment software on CD-ROM yet, and because no software house could begin to fill the disk with games it seems likely that CD-ROM's major entertainment function will be combining recorded music or digitised images and games.

A music CD can store 74 minutes of high-quality audio, so when a single CD-ROM/audio CD player is available game soundtracks will be revolutionised. Similarly, very detailed digitised pictures can be stored – lifelike enough to give the next generation of high-resolution monitors something to grapple with.

Realistically computer game graphics and cartoons will also be possible, but CD-ROM is too slow to play back live-action video – it can deliver only 2 or 3 frames a second, whereas 30 are needed to avoid jerkiness.

CD-ROM belongs to the same family as the magnetic disk and tape – it's just a wealthy, generous but rather unfamiliar relative from a distant branch, offering lots more memory in a small, safe space. Information can be stored virtually error-free – with error-correction codes in the data, mistakes can be reduced to 1 misread bit per quadrillion – and the disks cannot be erased. All this makes CD-ROM suitable for very large text-dominated databases; already they are being published, much like books. The CD-ROM disk in our illustration shows a sample from Nimbus's World Health Knowledge Base, a medical 'knowledge base' like an encyclopaedia but using all the facilities of the computer to search for particular words and help doctors in diagnosis.

It requires 640K of RAM, which shows why valuable CD-ROM won't appear in entertainment yet – the storage technology is useless without micros that can harness it.

"The CD-ROM publication, Groller's Academic American Encyclopaedia, took up just a fifth of the disk space with its 9 million words.

THE WORM TURNS

A CD-ROM disk is more like a book than a floppy; it's unerasable, and you can't write on it. But both problems could be solved by the next generation of erasable CD-ROM and optical disks, such as Tandy's forthcoming Thor-CD.

Though Tandy is keeping mum about its product, observers believe it will use a low-power laser to even out the disk's pattern of pits and lands, thus erasing the recorded data – and then start over again with a high-powered laser to record new data.

But it's not known how many erasings and rerecordings the disk will stand before it's literally worn away, so it won't be much good for high-score tables.

But there's a closer solution which could harness the massive memory of optical storage, and turn these disks from books into notepads.

CD-ROM is closely related to the WORMs – optical disks which use a similar method of reading unerasable data which is stored as a bumpy surface. The difference is that WORM (write once, read many times) disks can be initially written on by the disk drive, whereas CD-ROM disks must be manufactured. So a WORM disk is like an ordinary magnetic floppy that, once written to, is set permanently to write-protect.

Now (you guessed it) reusable optical disks have crept out of the WORMhold. Sony expected to ship the first £3,800 drives (which read and write) and £110 disks in May.

The new machines don't actually write on the disk over and over again with a laser – rather, they record data as magnetic fields, closely targeted on the disk by a laser.

And then they read the disk with a laser beam which is reflected in different ways by different magnetic charges, just as the pits and lands of a CD-ROM disk deflect light differently.

Sony's price tags aren't much higher than the cost of single-use WORM systems, and Sony promises they'll come down when production is in full swing – and, no doubt, when rival Sharp Electronics releases its competing product. So we can expect these reusable optical disks to steal the thunder from Thor-CD.

The business side of a CD-ROM disk (seen here in the centre some 58% bigger than lifesize). The encoded data only occupies approximately 25% of the total area from the centre out. Below: shows the reverse side; this disk contains the AIDS Expert/Information System from the World Health Knowledge Base, and is intended as a sample to show doctors how useful a CD-ROM medical encyclopaedia is



PC ENGINE – THE MIDGET MONSTER

We have several times mentioned the PC Engine in THE GAMES MACHINE and, understandably, reader curiosity regarding this mystery-shrouded Japanese wonder-beast has peaked. Contrary to the impression given by a journalist recently in a certain other well-known multiuser magazine of some venerability, very little is known about the machine yet. What we do know is that its manufacturers, Japanese NEC, have allowed very few UK software houses to have the machine for assessment, and have made them sign non-disclosure agreements. You can't buy a PC Engine in Britain yet, but THE GAMES MACHINE can reveal that you will be able to very soon – and tell you where. Will you want to? Read on . . .

Rare Ltd took delivery of a PC Engine back in December (see the mammoth feature in TGM**004**) – probably the first in Britain. Since then their hardware and software engineers have had six months to play around with it, so it was to Rare that we went to find out more.

And actually, there isn't much to find out. To every serious technical question, Rare's Chris Stamper shook his head and invoked the non-disclosure agreement. What follows is only the non-secret information – hardly the stuff of exciting investigative journalism! But really it is the games this monstrous midget plays that are important.

But before the games, in brief:
The PC Engine is amazingly small – though somewhat bigger than stated by the above-mentioned journalist who must have had a cut-down version at 4'' square – it actually measures 5½'' square by 1½'' deep, and weighs virtually nothing. Its rounded corners make it slightly resemble the Commodore C2N datacassette. The deep-cut slot accepts a ROM-card, there's an on/off switch and one joystick port, making this a one-player machine. There is a massive rear port, however, through which it is likely two PC Engines can be connected for two-player games, though at present there is no two-player software. The joystick is similar to the control cards of other consoles, but the PC Engine has a marvellous pause facility, controlled by a button on the joycard.

Sound is of arcade quality through six channels. Measurable pixel resolution is 320 x 256, allowing for 32 background colours and 32 sprite colours at once out of a very large palette (estimated at up to 512 colours). The ROM-card capacity is something NEC aren't talking about but, judging by the games, it's big! The processor is also a secret; that well-known journalist (again!) confidently states it is 16-bit – so does ACE magazine, but Shintaro Kanaoya (Readerpage TGM**006**) says otherwise: 8-bit, a fact he offers from Japanese magazine adverts, although the phrase used is '8-bit custom chip . . . ' how much do you have to customise an 8-bit chip to make it 16-bit?; Rare, who know, refuse to disclose, but they, like Shintaro, add that on-screen it certainly looks like a 16-bit . . .

The credit card-sized games measure 85mm x 55mm x 4mm (metric's easier for this one!). As Rare's Tim Stamper says, you can put a PC Engine in your bag/school satchel whatever and stuff loads of games in your pocket and cart the whole entertainment system around with you from telly to telly. It's just what the games industry needs, he thinks. His brother Chris is more cautious: 'The Nintendo is still for us,' he says, his support for the machine backed by Rare's current success in the American Nintendo charts (see the News pages and watch out for our 16-bit Nintendo coverage in TGM**009**.)

There is little doubt that the PC Engine is the nearest thing to an arcade machine in the quality of graphic presentation that you could get for the home, although at present the software support is light. HudsonSoft are the major software company behind the games already released in Japan, but Namco are taking an interest (there's one of their games previewed here.) Word has it that *R-Type* is the game that will make the PC Engine, and in our judgment it should be no problem. Just take a look at the screen shots and drool!

Speaking for Ocean, one of the very few other British companies to have an assessment PC Engine, Software Manager Gary Bracey said of it: 'It's nice. It's important for us to keep abreast of new developments.' But when asked whether Ocean would be producing any games for the machine, Gary helpfully replied:'No comment . . . ' and then added something unprintable!

GO!'s Product Manager, David Baxter was a touch more forthcoming: 'Brilliant, fantastic – it has so much potential within the Japanese price point. It's obviously going to be some time before the PC Engine hits the UK with any force. In Japan demand is outstripping supply; the next market they are heading for is the US.' And are they GO!ing for it? 'If the machine takes off we will produce games for it – naturally,' he replied.

UK prices are not firmed up yet, and to predict would be foolish – it costs around £100 in Japan. The games are expensive by UK standards, though cheaper than Nintendo. But if you want to give it a whirl, the place to keep your eye on is **In Stock Computers, *Elford Street, Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire LE6 5JU*.** They assure THE GAMES MACHINE that they will be first with this amazing arcade-quality home console and it *will* be available shortly.



The credit-card-sized ROMs that make it all happen

THE GAMES

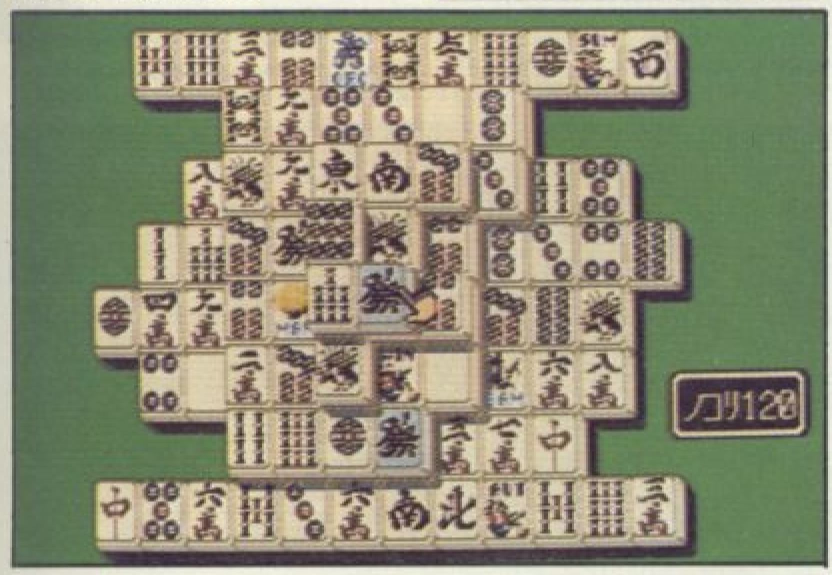
Out of some 11 PC Engine games which have drifted into Britain, THE GAMES MACHINE got to grips with the six best to give some indication of what to expect. We'll let the pictures do most of the talking; but be assured, the sound quality is second-to-none. The six we looked at – Japanese/English translations permitting – are: *Shanghai, Wonder Boy, Drunken Master, Victory Run, R-Type* and *Tale Of The Monster Path.*



With thanks to Rare Limited, Shintaro Kanoya for the translations (including the fascinating but irrelevant information that 'takoushi' is Japanese for 'octopus cow') and Mark Betteridge (who played the games to perfection, except Tale Of The Monster Path, brilliantly done by Chris Stamper.)

SHANGHAI Hudson-Soft
Is a puzzle game using Mah-jong character blocks. These are arranged in varied numbers of several layers in a roughly pyramid-shape. The object is to point at a character block on the exterior of the top layer and match it to another of the same character on any of the lower layers. If this is accomplished the selected block vanishes – and so the game proceeds, the final object being to eliminate as many blocks as you can. As you can see from the screen shot, the blocks are beautifully detailed and rendered in shaded, isometric 3-D. A compelling and lengthy game.





Shanghai: ***the hand has selected two identical Mah-jong blocks – now the one on the top (fourth) layer will vanish***



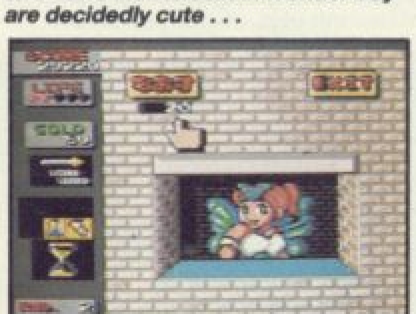
In* Wonder Boy *the bigger nasty sprites are neatly animated. As he vanishes in a puff of smoke, the expression on the evil genie's face adds delight to the game



WONDER BOY Hudson-Soft
We decided this one was aimed more at the younger player, which isn't to say it's easy, and there are hours of play involved to complete it. Wonder Boy moves through many, often scrolling, land and townscapes, attacking monsters and other hazards. As he despatches his opponents, they turn into money or other useful items which aid him in the adventure. With the money, he can visit shops and purchase other essential goods. The larger sprite monsters are delightfully designed and full of animated detail.



Japanese games relish cute characters – and the vendors in* Wonder Boy *are decidedly cute . . .



This is the game the PC Engine has waited for – R-Type. Turn the page to see the action!



PRESS ANY KEY

DRUNKEN MASTER Hudson-Soft

A martial arts game which shows what the PC Engine can do. The sprites are more than half the screen's height with all major details fully animated. Figure movement is extraordinarily realistic, set against several different backdrops (including nighttime versions) with between-screen bonus games. The odd title derives from the fact that later opponents keep swigging from bottles – the more they drink the harder they are to despatch because they get so drunk they don't even know they've been hit!



In **Drunken Master** *the main enemies are rushing grey monks who bowl over the hero unless he rapidly knocks them out of the way*



Standing over half the screen's height, the sprites in **Drunken Master** *are highly detailed and fully, smoothly animated. The hero takes on a female opponent*

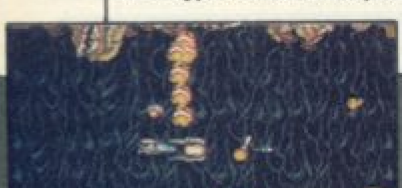


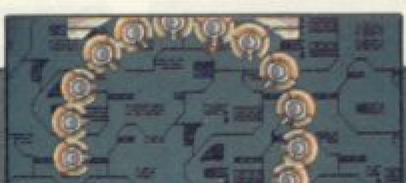
R-TYPE Hudson-Soft

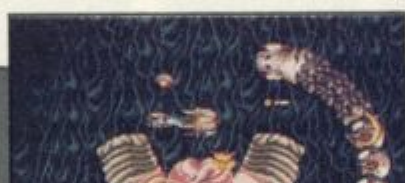
This is the game tipped to put the PC Engine in the big-time. If you have seen or played the Irem arcade machine you will be able to judge for yourself how accurate this version is from the screen shots. Suffice to say it has everything. The scrolling, explosions, single sprites and conglomerate sprites are astonishing. It seems unbelievable that this can all be packed into one tiny ROM-card, and *R-Type* shows – better than anything – the PC Engine's hardware capability.



The exciting Irem arcade machine in a pocket-sized console! Everything in **R-Type** *is here! Multiple weapons collection as you progress, the eerily organic backdrops, beautifully animated missiles, the repulsively pulsating heart and the snake writhing through its ventricular chambers, the brilliantly designed HR Giger-style 'Aliens' monster – and, of course, the massive alien spaceship with its disintegrating modules – and more . . .*











TALE OF THE MONSTER PATH

Namco

Is an immensely detailed, scrolling arcade-adventure – a quest for something . . . well, Japanese. The running, jumping and swimming hero is equipped with a sword to rid himself of many enemies as he moves swiftly through ever-changing landscapes. The massive alien spaceship with its disintegrating modules – and more . . . The title is translated from the Japanese by Shintaro Kanoya (Rare didn't know what it meant), so it is approximate!

The top-right corner has a window, which is a marvellous variation on the old *Defender* radar scanner – a complete isometric 3-D world showing the hero's immediate surroundings. Killing certain monsters accesses subgame screens; in some you can gamble on dice throws to increase your wealth (which buys you much), others let you pray to a buddah which may increase your spiritual health, still others turn out to be shops selling food, weapons and other items lost in the Japanese text! One, some 15 minutes into the game, shows a geisha girl performing a striptease.

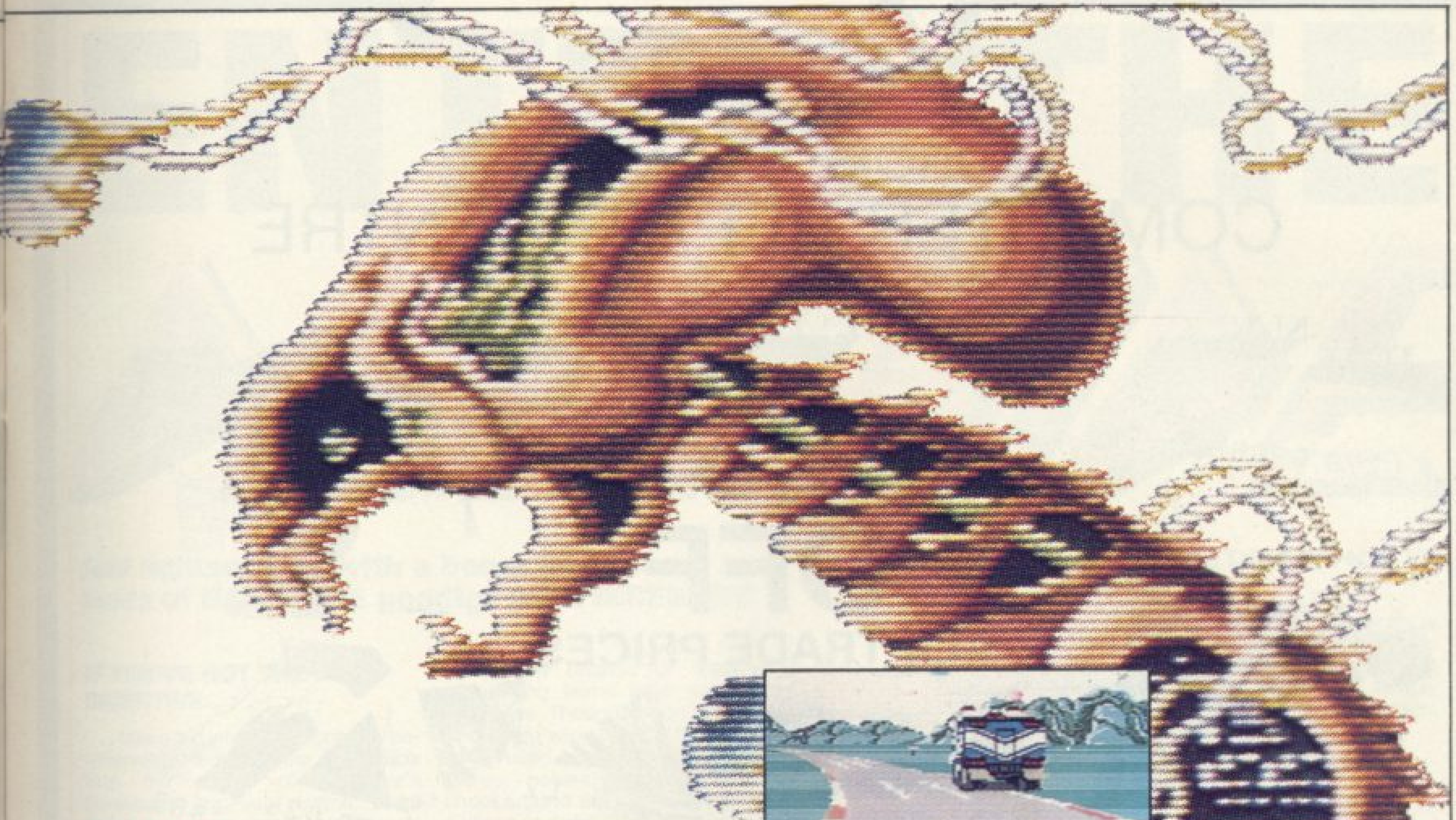


The hero swipes a nasty in **Tale Of The Monster Path** *against densely detailed, scrolling backdrops. Top-right is the animated 3-D 'scanner' showing current location in the immediate locale*



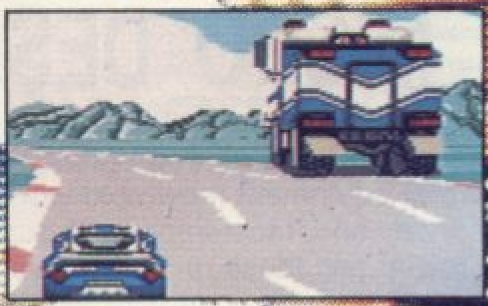
One of the **Monster Path** *sub-games: the geisha girl is about to strip – a tease almost custom-designed to show the PC Engine's marvellous pause facility!*





VICTORY RUN Hudson-Soft
As the sheer quality and ferocity of *Drunken Master* revitalises the beat-'em-up game, so *Victory Run* adds a new dimension to the road racer. This is one of the best! It uses hidden horizons and even double-hidden horizons to add reality to the effect and sometimes creates severe cornering problems. Taking hills too fast can have you leaping off the road. The 3-D animation effect on bikers, other cars and vast juggernauts is completely convincing without the accustomed frame jumps of other home micro racer games. Careless driving can cost you gear teeth too – trying to engage a damaged gear results in a frighteningly accurate engine tearing sound from the speakers!





Two consecutive shots only a second apart in Victory Run *which give some idea of the ultra smooth 3-D animation on the hills effect and the sprites*





A PC Engine game map from a Japanese magazine: Tale Of The Monster Path *revealed in enormous detail*

ENTER THE DARK SIDE

And lighten it up with a home laser show and loads of DARK SIDE goodies from INCENTIVE

IF YOU'VE GOT THE INCENTIVE . . .

. . . take a trip into the amazing three-dimensional world of the ***Dark Side*** from the power of Inventive's **Freescape** graphics routine. ***Dark Side*** is the superb sequel to last year's smash hit *Driller* (TGM**002** 96%) and tells of an adventure 200 years later as the Ketars, a banished group of the futuristic human race, are planning retribution. Their revenge takes the form of Zephyr One (currently being used as Incentive's office), a giant laser generator designed to destroy Evath. The suspense is killing . . . read the review on page 74 to find out more about the game.

SUPER CHARGE THOSE LASERS!

Beam your braincells into life and be in with a chance of winning a captivating home laser show from **Incentive**. Though not quite powerful enough to wipe out Evath, this prize, when used in conjunction with your stereo, generates laser beams to shoot around the room, bouncing off ceilings and walls – it works rather well at parties (Hey man, like . . . wow!).

The laser show is top prize . . . Ten second prize-winners get Freescape free-standing pens; stand a pen, ball-point down, vertically on the base of the holder, and it stays there supported by a magnetic field – it also works well at parties (Hey man, like that's reasonably interesting.) 25 runners up each get a ***Dark Side*** A2 poster with artwork by Steinar Lund and a key ring each, which may not make you the life and soul of a party unless you attach the keys of a Rolls Royce to the ring.

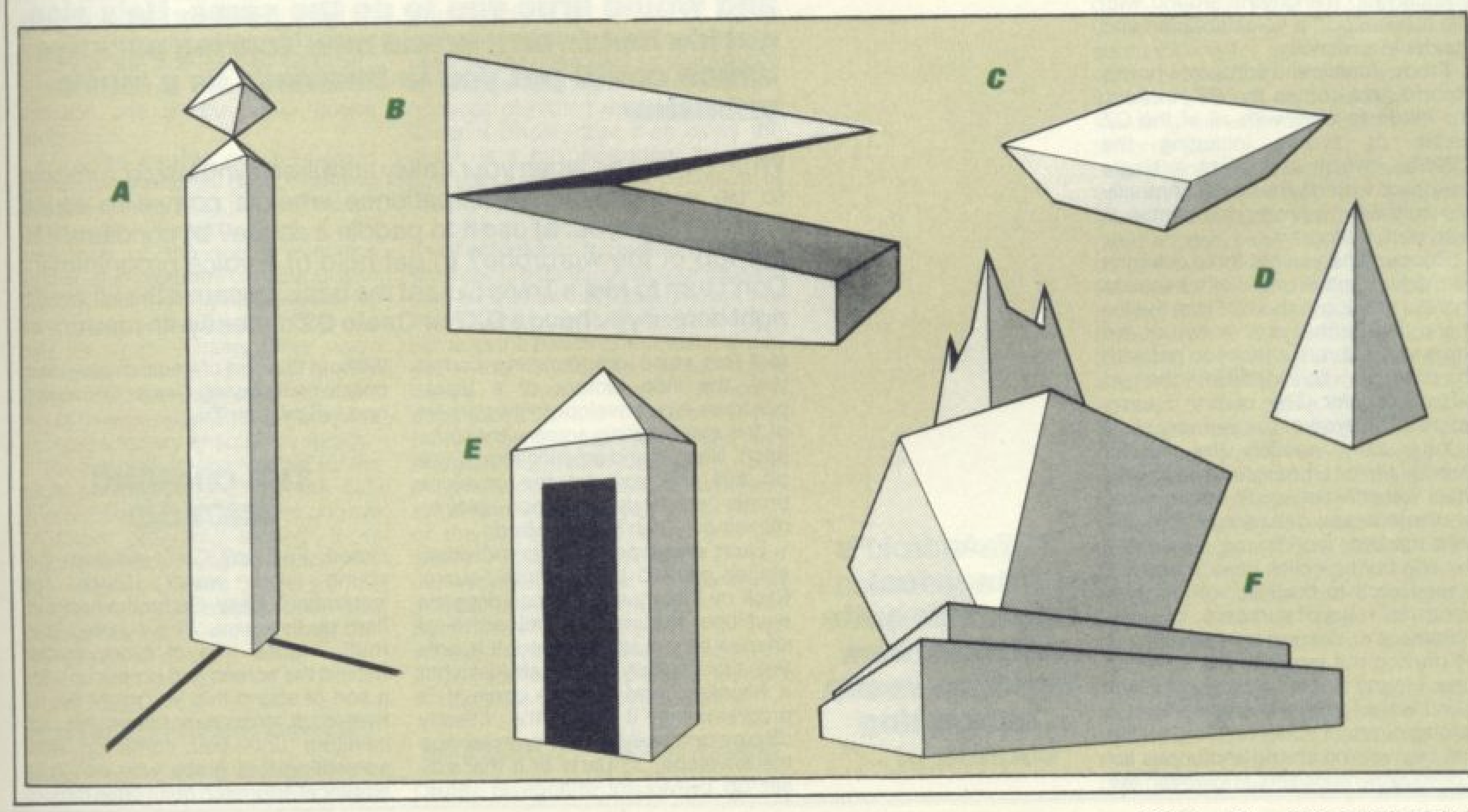
A FABULOUS HOME LASER LIGHT SHOW, SELF-SUPPORTING PENS, *DARK SIDE* ***POSTERS AND KEY-RINGS!***

I'LL NAME THAT ZEPHYR IN ONE . . .

. . . and if you can, a home laser show could be yours as long as you can name some of the objects pictured here, taken from ***Dark Side***. Simply decide which of the six objects (lettered A – F) are:

1: Energy Collecting Devices
2: Zephyr One
3: Telepod
4: Telepod Crystal

Clues can be found in the ***Dark Side*** review. Having sorted out which is what, write the answers on a postcard or back of a sealed orbiting space cruiser and send it to: **WHO'S AFRAID OF THE DARK? COMP, THE GAMES MACHINE, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB*** *to arrive no later than July 21. All entrants must abide by the competition rules, as detailed in the masthead, unless they, like the Ketars, want to be banished to some desolate, despairing place like Basingstoke.*



When the brothers Kashio developed a synthesizer they in fact researched, developed and designed a beauty of an instrument. It is capable of nice fat synth sounds and also is not too bad at impersonating instruments. However, somewhere between the design stage and the marketing men there was obviously a great discrepancy.

How do I know that? Because Casio put out the CZ series with the most dog-awful set of voices imaginable, skimped on the internal memory and made it nearly as hard to program as the rival Yamaha DX series. They improved matters slightly with the later versions, but the most popular (and of course the cheapest) CZ101 and 1000 are swine to program. In fact most of the voices that you see (and buy) use only a small part of its full potential.

The specfication has an eight-stage envelope; that is to say a sound, timbre and pitchshaper that can go through eight rises-and-falls before the sound has finished. Most voices only use two or three. Additionally, this can be doubled up on the twin lines that the oscillators can follow. To throw several socket sets into the works, the sound generation is provided by combining two waveforms. And I haven't mentioned the other controls like noise and ring modulation. Adding insult to injury: the LCD is not backlit, is obviously made for myopic fleas, and you can't name your sound; Casio managed to name their own useless 16 sounds, but *your* 16 sounds will always be called 'Internal 1,2,3, etc. (Yamaha must have rubbed their yen-laden hands with glee when they launched the rival DX100 with 192 voices on board, all named *and* with cassette storage facilities).



ANDRO

Ever in search of the easy life, Jon Bates has been programming sounds with apparent ease using a couple of amazing voice programmers and would urge you to do the same. He's also got his hands on a brand new scoring package which could put you in business as a music publisher

What do you do when your newly acquired synthesizer turns out to be a crash course in patience when it comes to sound creation? Do you: **a)** use it to paddle a canoe? **b)** condemn it to the top of the wardrobe? **c)** get hold of a voice programmer? Don't turn to Mel's Trivia Quiz at the back, because the answer's right here: if you have a **DX7** or **Casio CZ** series synth read on.

COULD BE A WINNER

But put it all on screen, make it so that you can tug the graphs around with the mouse, add a voice librarian and you have a winner.

From American software house **Hybrid Arts** comes the *CZ-Android*. It's made to work with all of the CZ series of synths including the CZ230S, which is in fact a single keyboard with drums and all. Actually the only way to program the latter is with such a program.

Boot up and you get three columns all marked 'initialize'. That's because there is nothing in them!. From the file menu, load either one or two of the three voice libraries that you get with the program – this loads into the two outer columns. The centre column refers to the synthesizer memory area.

You can transfer the voices individually or *en masse* by dragging them with the mouse. To edit a voice, or create a new one, drag it into the area marked 'workspace' – actually the edit buffer – click on edit and the screen slips to the edit with its two horizontal rows of numbers. You can increment or decrement these at will by moving the arrow to the selected area. I found this to be pretty efficient if you want to copy the voice from a voicing chart. (If you didn't know, you can buy voicing charts and books for individual synthesizers.) However, the real fast voice programming comes with the little picture of a black, postman-type envelope in the corners of the main editing areas – those for pitch, filtering and amplification. Click on this and you get the envelope proper ('envelope': envelope – play on meanings. Yeah? Never Mind.)

Each envelope has the individual stages marked by a minute square. Click on the square and can drag the envelope around into all sorts of shapes very quickly indeed. It is only then that you fully appreciate just what a hopeless and chancy game it is programming it from the miserly display on the synth. As you reshape the envelope, so parts of it that you set up previously change in value. Without this sort of visual display I can only liken it playing *Carrier Command* on a wristwatch TV.

> "CZ-Android's empirical approach quite often throws up some really interesting sounds . . . "

THE CUNNING ANDROID

Bored. Fed up? Can't program the sound you want? Stuck for inspiration? Easy. Go for the **Android** item on the menu. This cunning little routine does lots of fancy maths behind the screen and comes up with a sort of sound that you might like to tweak up. You can repeat this ad infinitum until you come up with something that grabs your ear. This empirical approach quite often throws



ID MUSIC

up some really interesting sounds, ones that you wouldn't probably find if you just tried for one particular sound. If the sound is a bit thin you have a Distort option which beefs it up a little. Try hitting this several times for fun. The lower part of the edit screen is for the fine and coarse detuning, octave setting, and waveform selection and all the other sound peripherals.

All voices created can be named and filed on the library page. Shuffling voices within libraries is just a matter of dragging sounds around. If you have one of the touch sensitive Casios, the program can cope with these as well. My only niggle is that for each edit you have to reach over and play the synth – many other voice programs have an autoplay feature which can be user-defined. This would have capped what is otherwise a simple and very effective program.

You can get it for the Atari ST for the price of £89.95. In effect the *CZ-Android* is a spin-off from the original *DX-Droid* program. Indeed it is programmed by the same person, one Tom Bojares. Owners of 'the world's most popular synthesizer' with sales topping the half a million mark can now pay full attention.

A STAGGERING ARRAY

To be fair, the world marketplace is flooded with DX7 programs which isn't surprising. You'd be a bit silly to try and establish a good market profile with a program that voiced something obscure. Oddly enough, I found the *DX-Droid* not such a bundle of joy to work with. It is very, very comprehensive, but having become used to the idea that I can reshape envelopes etc, with the mouse, the concept of hitting numbers situated under a display that then alters the graph is a bit pedestrian. It's a bit confusing at first in its definition of 'banks', 'files', 'catalogues'.

However it does have a staggering array of features. It can handle, at any one time, 18 banks of 32 sounds each plus 1032 extra individual presets that do not necessarily have to be the same as the banks of sounds. It would seem that all sounds contain extra details known as 'function parameters'; that is: the details of the modulation and pitch wheel and foot pedals as opposed to just the 'edit parameters' which are the hundreds of numbers that control the creation of the basic sound. When you are sending voices/banks to the DX you can chose whether to send all parameters or function or edit parameters. It has one or two idiosyncrasies: it won't carry on unless you load a file disk into it which is a bit strange. But not to worry.

EFFICIENT LIBRARIAN

On the first screen proper you get a host of features. The screen, which always has an ominous black background, uses the top area as main command and is run from the function keys – there are no drop-down menus which is surprising. Underneath this is a copious list of subfunctions for each area of work, which works from the mouse. The screen bottom is reserved for inputting commands in response to the prompts.

> "... programming a DX7 is about as much fun as shooting yourself in the foot."

As a librarian it is extra efficient. You can store lots of sounds, organise them and access them easily. For rapid access, each file of sounds can be given a 126-character index card. All lists of files and indexes can be printed out. The accessibility is on many levels – index numbers (huh!), file name or even part of a file name so that it gathers all files with, say, 'string' as part of the name. Files can be locked or unlocked, which is a failsafe device to prevent you overwriting your favourite sounds. Sounds are shuffled between locations within banks with ease, as they are between the synth and the program. It just takes a bit of understanding of the program's hierarchy to follow what is going on, however there is bags of help available at all times, which is a Good Thing.

Voice creation is fairly painless, increment and decrement all the numbers. You can do this either on the global page that lists all the numbers (numerical edit) or flip to the



The DX Droid utility from Hybrid Arts Inc.

individual graph pages. I think I would prefer a higher resolution screen that has all the graphs on display and that you can drag around. Any edited parameters are marked with an asterisk and there is always the original version to compare it with both visually, numerically and aurally. Any edit you make is automatically sounded on the synth or triggered from the F9 key.

DON'T SHOOT THE PIANIST'S FOOT

However it comes into its own when it's in the business of creating voices. Like the Casio version, there is a **Droid** feature which generates basic sounds for you to tweak. But there are two options: 'Droid 1' is the sane, musical version, 'Droid 2' is the more wacky sounds. You can do this to individual voices or a whole bank at a time. You can go over the top and create an entire fleet of random voices; 18 x 32 voices! Perhaps its best feature is the combination of two voices to produce a third composite voice. This is something quite unique. You can 'glide' between the sounds and the program lets you determine just how much of each sound you want.

If all this isn't enough, you can beef up the sounds by hitting a distort key. Altogether it is a very feature-packed program but not one to be taken lightly in a few minutes. I tried it on both the Mk1 and Mk2 versions of the DX7 and it worked with no problems on either. It will also work with any of the DX7 tone modules. As programming a DX7 is about as much fun as shooting yourself in the foot, any program which uses the computer to creatively set up sounds is a bonus. However, I do like dragging graphs around with my mouse . . . The cost of this creative lot is a weighty £179.95.

Both these programs have been available in the States and to the cognoscenti for some time time now, *DX-Droid* first appearing in about August 1986 and the *CZ-Android* a few months later. They still have considerable advantages over other voicing software, and certainly the random and yet sensible voice creation is a wonderful bonus that is only just being ripped-off by newer programs. The *DX-Droid* is not something that you can get into in a matter of a few minutes, in fact I found that it took quite some time to adjust, whereas the Casio equivalent was pretty selfevident – in other words you can almost throw the manual away. The screen display for the *CZ-Android* has been copied many times by other synth voicing programs. Anyway it can't be all that bad as a certain prominent Newsfield personage not a million miles away from THE GAMES MACHINE office/structure/chaos area is a happy man since he got one.

> **"DX-Droid's best feature is the combination of two voices to produce a third composite voice."**

BOOSEY & HAWKES ET AL

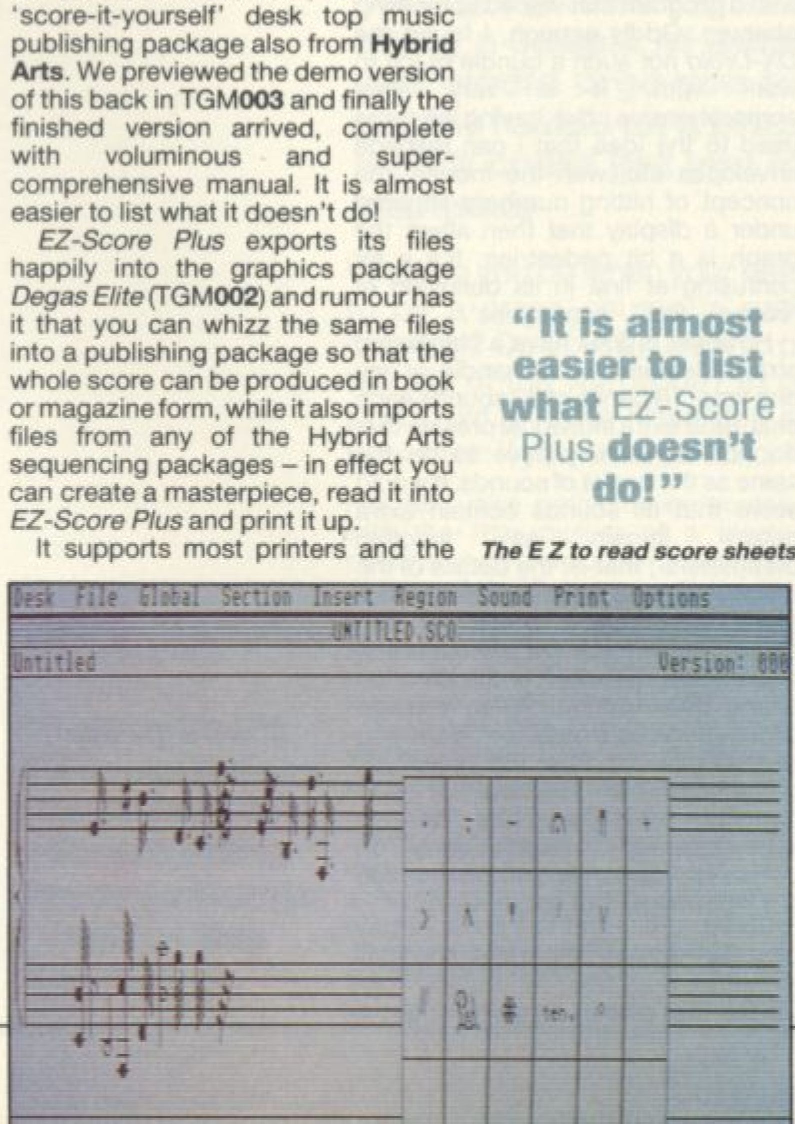
On to the business end, that is the 'score-it-yourself' desk top music publishing package also from **Hybrid Arts**. We previewed the demo version of this back in TGM**003** and finally the finished version arrived, complete with voluminous and super-comprehensive manual. It is almost easier to list what it doesn't do!

EZ-Score Plus exports its files happily into the graphics package *Degas Elite* (TGM**002**) and rumour has it that you can whizz the same files into a publishing package so that the whole score can be produced in book or magazine form, while it also imports files from any of the Hybrid Arts sequencing packages – in effect you can create a masterpiece, read it into *EZ-Score Plus* and print it up.

> **"It is almost easier to list what EZ-Score Plus doesn't do!"**

It supports most printers and the printing resolution is superb. For the real thing a laserprinter is a must; mind you, at that you are getting very serious indeed. It will doubtless find lots of uses in educational establishments since exams now use compositions with scored out parts – there is nothing like the hardcopy in front of you for fine-tuning the details.

The E Z to read score sheets



The program boasts over 140 musical notes, rests, dynamic markings, and includes slurs, ties and phrasing. Key and clef are no problem and it automatically puts beams on individual quavers to tidy them up. It supports chords symbols and even guitar tabulature. The score can be expanded and compressed for fine-detail editing. Tempo marks, rehearsal marks, repeats, cut and paste copy are just some of the things it can do. In short, it is a professional package.

NOTHING FOR VIOLA

You can put lyrics in and even design a title page and lay out your score. The program can run in a variety of ways and I found for me it could be worked faster by a combination of mouse and ST keyboard. Although it has a very well-thought-out idea for inputting from a MIDI keyboard and using the controllers (such as pitch and modulation wheels as screen controllers – A for effort, lads), I think it will come into its own when auto-scoring, as they put it, from the files from other Hybrid Arts sequencers; this is where a lot of sweat is painlessly removed.

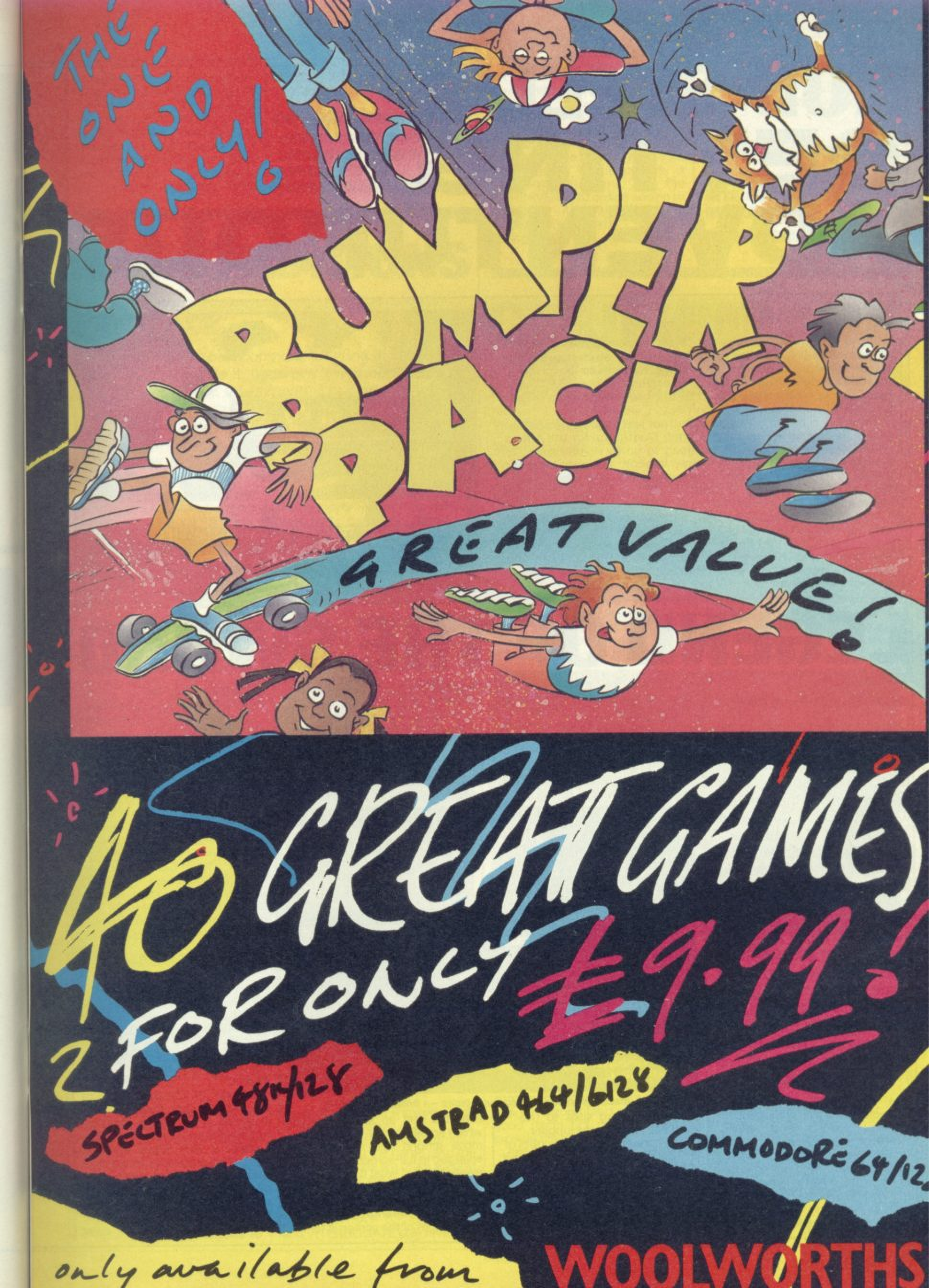
Although step-time editing and input of notes is eminently possible, it is nonetheless a slow and tiresome process and not one I would want to do at any length. But auto-score and then fine-edit sounds a far better possibility. Of course it can also play back the score either via the internal chip or any MIDI instrument left lying around.

Only a couple of moans: it only writes on up to three staves at a time, so symphonic scores are out; it doesn't do the alto clef, so that scuppers any chance of writing for viola (shame!); and when you drop notes in with the mouse, especially above or below the stave, it is very much a hit-and-miss affair. A window that told you what note was under the mouse when in 'note insert' mode would save a lot of squinting. I was running high resolution, have good eyesight and found it exasperating. To you, the cost of *EZ-Score Plus* is £84.95.

Hybrid Arts are also trying to establish a delight called HybriSwitch as an industry standard – a program which allows other programs to remain resident in the RAM and swap from one to another. Not an original idea but useful.

All these programs came from Hybrid Arts whose UK address is: **Syndromic Music, *24-26 Avenue Mews, London, N10 3NP*.**

The next issue has the promised MSX music review with lots of info on how to get the best from MSX. Sorry the Archie didn't get a look in but for various technical and postal reasons it didn't quite happen. Hang on in there. As ever the problem page is open.


THE ONE AND ONLY!
BUMPER PACK
GREAT VALUE!
40 GREAT GAMES FOR ONLY £9.99!
SPECTRUM 48K/128
AMSTRAD 464/6128
COMMODORE 64/12
only available from
WOOLWORTHS

ROB STEEL'S GETTING ADVENTUROUS

STEEL SHAVINGS

State-of-the-art adventures for 16-bit machines may look and play wonderfully, causing players to wonder open-mouthed at the complexity and beauty of the things, but who do we turn to in times of drought? The faithful old Spectrum. If not for Sir Clive's black box of magic there would be but one adventure to review this month, and that just wouldn't do . . . would it?

There are rumblings, however, and not just from today's lunch; Magnetic Scrolls are about to launch *Corruption* for the Amiga (and if their track record is anything to go by conversions for every conceivable format will follow); Infocom are set to blow our minds with their range of *Infocomics* and it is rumoured there is movement in the Level 9 camp . . . The adventure future is looking so bright we might not all be stuck with *Shades*.

I would like to thank Tony Bridge – the Grand Elf of yesteryear – for his excellent perusal of STAC last issue. He has since written to me to point out that due to old age and one too many pints of Tolkiens Tipple, he gave the wrong credit for *Shymer*, the adventure supplied with STAC. It was written by Sandra Sharkey and not Pat Winstanley.



Corruption – *They should have torched the Volvo – Amiga screen*

LEGEND OF THE SWORD

Rainbird
ATARI ST Diskette: £24.95

A long time ago, in the days of AMTIX magazine, I was sent an adventure from Silicon Soft for the Amstrad CPC 6128. I remember being very frustrated as I was impressed with the game, but due to powers beyond my control (the magazine sadly folded) I could not review it. However, I am happy to report my frustrations have been relieved, and apart from that, the game, *Legend Of The Sword*, has reappeared for the Atari ST courtesy of Rainbird . . . and it is at least as good as I remember it.

The inhabitants of Anar are protected from evil by a legendary mystical sword and shield. However, the evil wizard, Suzar, (don't yawn, it gets better) attacked and wiped out an entire army with relative ease using mutated humanoids. You and your band of five merry men have been volunteered by the king to find the sword and use it to destroy Suzar before he grows powerful enough to enslave the whole of Anar.

The game opens with you and your group approaching the island of Anar on board a merchant ship – following your escape from the wizard's hordes on a raft. Your first decision is which of the three possible landing sites to use – from this point it gets tougher.

The screen layout and control of the game are what make *Legend Of The Sword* work so well. Top of the page are the main menu commands; Options, Cancel, Actions, Map and Execute, below this are two picture frames displaying your current action or dilemma and present location. Only four colours are used for the pictures (as in the Amstrad version of yore) but the sequel, *The Final Battle* is boasting 16-colour graphical displays. To the right of these windows is a scroll displaying action/options available and an attractive map which scrolls (on the scroll) as you move around (the map can be enlarged to full-screen size if one's eyesight is not what it was.) Below the scroll are the direction icons (N, SW,IN etc) and a candle depicting the strength of the party. The bottom of the screen is for the more-than-adequate text descriptions and your typed input.



Loadsa text, loadsa graphics and loadsa puzzles – a brilliant adventure

The greatest part of the game can be completed using the mouse to click on selected instructions and icons, but for those of us who like to keep our fingers flexible, the game may be played using text input only.

The atmosphere created by the thoughtful descriptions is tense and at times exciting – and the graphics add to it. Moving from place to place is not acknowledged merely by an OK but by neat phrases such as 'Daville takes the lead as your party climbs the slippery steps to the small door at the top'.

A HELPING HAND?

Interaction is a delight, most inputs – those not completely obscure – are awarded with a satisfactory reply of one sort or another. Every action you undertake has at least two lines of descriptive text to inform of the results.

Legend Of The Sword is most enjoyable to play, there are many locations – all with a graphical representation – and plenty to do. I spent a very happy time just wandering around the kingdom of Anar not achieving anything in particular, just enjoying the scenery (and persistently scoring 0%). I was in fact quite privileged because Samara from our sister

magazine CRASH, materialised by my side and demanded a go – I could not refuse. Unfortunately this ended my stint with *Legend Of The Sword*, rest assured though, once Samara has disappeared back to who knows where, I shall have another go . . . I just hope that Harlequin character from ZZAP!64 doesn't want to play – he's mean.

ATMOSPHERE 92%
INTERACTION 90%
OVERALL 91%

INVESTIGATIONS

Graphtext 128K
Spectrum 128K Cassette: £3.95

It's nice to see a new company entering the adventure market. Let's face it, there are few enough releases about at present. *Investigations* has been written by **Paul Tomkins** and **Robert Radburn** of Graphtext 128 using Gilsoft's *PAW*. It includes over 100 locations, 88 objects and a 400-word vocabulary – all the ingredients of a promising adventure . . . have they got the mix right?

The game takes place in and around Redbourne Manor where it transpires that Lord Anthony Forbes has been murdered . . . and you are on the case. You have only 14 hours to solve the dastardly deed before your department moves you on to something else. Luckily you have the help of another ace detective, Philip Keen, who follows you around and gives advice when he can.

Graphtext claim the game is very user-friendly in as much as you can move on to another problem if you get stuck at any point. It also reckons to have an answer for most inputs and offers lengthy EXAMINE descriptions.



The loading screen holds clues to playing the game and needs close investigation

So putting aside my dislike for detective adventures – especially those with a time limit – I loaded the game.

DEFECTIVE DETECTIVE

I imagine it to be very difficult to program an adventure that relies on the player undertaking certain tasks at particular times – especially using a utility such as *PAW* – because of the number of errors I come across in games of this ilk. I spent most of my time in *Investigations* hanging around using the WAIT command. One strange happening occurred whilst in the cook's room. One is supposed to enter her wardrobe and hide there until she comes into the room, hides a key under her pillow and leaves. I managed to clamber in and out of the wardrobe while she was still in the room . . . she didn't notice me! Either she has a very large room with lots of places to hide or she's deaf and blind. Either way it showed a lack of attention to detail.

The graphics are nicely done but add nothing to the game, and the text descriptions are often so long that the MORE message is almost permanently on the screen.

Character interaction is fairly basic with SAY TO, QUESTION and INTERROGATE only revealing informaton if you ask the right person the right question at the right time or are carrying the correct item. However, the time limit is ample to glean some sort of indication of what is expected of you, and once on the right trail, *Investigations* opens up into a fairly enjoyable game, with the RAMSAVE/LOAD option adding to playability. Unfortunately it is limited, with some solutions relying more on chance than detective work. Hopefully Graphtext's next product, *Murder On The Manhattan* will be a little better.

ATMOSPHERE 53%
INTERACTION 56%
OVERALL 54%

DR JEKYL AND MR HYDE

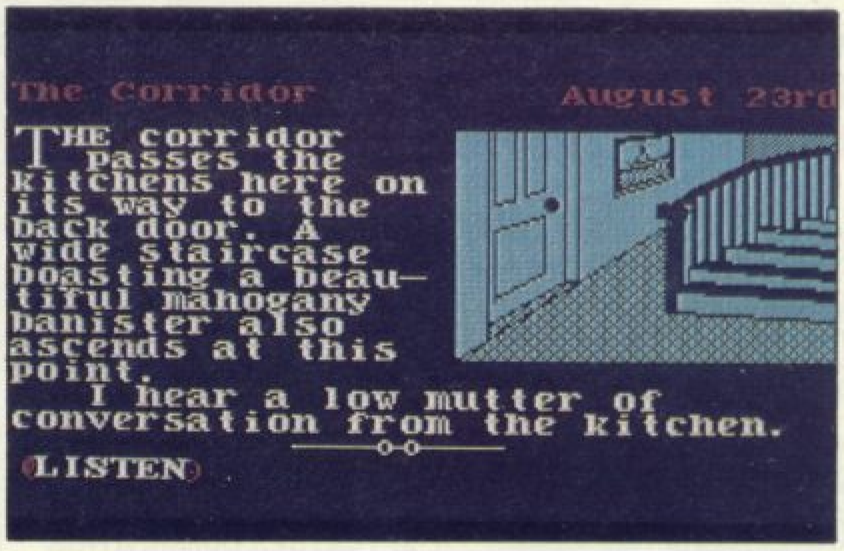
The Essential Myth
Spectrum 48K: £7.95

Mark Davies, **Lee Hodgson** and **Andrew Dean** together form The Essential Myth software company. Their previous exploits include *Book Of The Dead* and *The Gacpac* – the latter being a compression and optimisation utility coupled with a font design facility for Incentive's *Graphic Adventure Creator*.

Dr Jekyl And Mr Hyde – A Gothic Nightmare is reminiscent of Rod Pike's style – author of *Pilgrim*, *Dracula*, *Frankenstein* and *Wolfman*. This is no bad thing as the man is a writer worth emulating – but does his influence work for The Essential Myth?

Written using Gilsoft's *PAW*, this adventure possibly tries too hard to create an atmosphere. It shoves prose down your throat until one begins to long for a brief command. However, I'm always one for a good read as well as a good game but does *J And H* provide the latter? . . .

Arriving in three parts – at least value for money is offered – part one (Dichotomies) concerns the good Doctor and his quest to make and drink the potion which transforms him into the bestial Mr Hyde. Salt, alcohol and phosphorus are the three main ingredients and they can all be found with a little logical thought and character interaction. Unfortunately due to the game's very fast real-time element, one or two typing errors and you may find progress impossible.



A change is as good as a rest, let's hope Jekyll doesn't get arrested for his change

HYDE AND SHRIEK

Part two (Duality) can only be entered by use of a password gleaned from the closing scenes of part one. Slightly tougher than Dichotomies but with the same attention to detail, it's more enjoyable to play, especially as the real-time slows to a more manageable pace.

I found a bug!! The letter

PRESS ANY KEY

accompanying the game stated that all bugs would be ironed out before the game went on general release. However, I want to mention this one . . . just in case the publishers have not come across it! One of the many useful commands is LAST, which takes you back to your preceding location and; after traveling to Gaunt street in a cab and subsequently returning home I stood in my hallway and typed it. It took me back inside the cab which proceeded to take me to Reeve Lane, an as yet undiscovered address, where I found an estate agent. Obviously I could not interact much, as I knew not why I was there, but the presence of such an error is worrying.

The third part (Denouement) purports to be the toughest of the three. Again entered through a password, it probably is of at least the same standard as the other parts. Unfortunately I was not supplied with the password and deadlines prevented me finishing part two. So I didn't play it.

Overall *J And H* has a very professional feel about it, including plenty of useful commands to aid the struggling adventurer; MEMSAVE/LOAD, AGAIN, OOPS, LAST, EXITS and WAIT – most of which may be abbreviated. Character interaction is also extensive with commands such as 'Ask Poole about the caddy' and 'Say to Footman, 'How are you?' '. Sentences may be strung together via a comma or full stop and pronouns may be used. This, together with the attention to detail and atmosphere created by the over-the-top prose, make for a very worthwhile game.

Soon to be released on all major 8-bit formats plus the Atari ST, *Dr Jekyl And Mr Hyde* should do well for The Essential Myth.

The game is only available mail order at present; the address is: **The Essential Myth, *54 Church Street, Tewksbury, Glos GL20 5RZ*.**

ATMOSPHERE 85%
INTERACTION 78%
OVERALL 82%

SKELVULLYN TWINE

Eighth Day Software
Spectrum 48K: £5.50

Eighth Day Software, makers of such greats as *Quann Tulla* (recently revamped, renamed and rereleased as *Federation*), *Faerie* and *Ice Station Zebra* hope to add to their list of successes with the strangely named *Skelvullyn Twine*.

Described as a suite of four programs for all Spectrums in 48K mode, *Skelvullyn Twine* offers good value for money. Comprising an introductory database with graphics plus three text-only adventure programs, the whole package was designed as an interactive novel. The introduction presents an outline of the game-world and details the events preceding those depicted in the adventure, together with full instructions on how to play. The three parts of the game involve preparation for the quest, travelling toward the confrontation and finally the meeting with Matcher.

The first part opens with you in the village south of a sickle vendor's shop. The first problem is how to get the sickle; not difficult once you've found the piggy bank. The most illogical puzzle in part one concerns a worm in the hallway and a sleeping hedgehog. I felt there was insufficient information given to solve the problem and it may have players stumped for some time.

TWINE TIME

Part two involves travelling through the strange landscape in search of Tolan. You come across Jigbugs, Saw Beetles and Pfrumps, all of which have to be sussed out using the extensive examine command and used to your advantage.

Part three – the arrival – is an escape from dungeons, floating under balloons, rescuing Tolan, walking through fire and eventually, right at the end, beginning another quest.

The only drawback with *Skelvullyn Twine* is the fact that it is written with the now slightly dated *Quill, Illustrator, Patch* etc. Having said that, the only real restrictions are those of input plus some system commands which modern utilities such as *PAW* incorporates.

Playing is enjoyable and most instructions have been anticipated by the authors. A good atmosphere is created by both the location and event descriptions and, although some of the inhabitants are a little strange, they are well-suited to the game-world. Taking into account the restrictions of the utility used to create *Skelvullyn Twine*, the game is interesting and very playable and includes the all-important incentive to finish the quest.

ATMOSPHERE 71%
INTERACTION 67%
OVERALL 69%

RESULTS OF TGM005 & TGM006 COMPETITIONS

We apologise for omitting the results last issue. Here they are:

WIN AN AMIGA (II)

The answer was 28.80481. The winner is **Paul Merchant**, Bucks SL7 1TN.

THREE STOOGES

Winner: Sharron Booth, Skegness PE24 5JT

Runners-up: Michael Downey, South Wirral L65 6RG; Kane Ropen, Clwyd LL19 9TY; Zein El Abidein, The Netherlands; Ian Etheridge, Leeds LS11 6NN; Richard Morgan, Norfolk NR30 1HP; Steven Dawson, Lancs BB6 7NH; M Westall, Dorset BH12 4HA; Barry Blyth, Birmingham B37 5AB; D Orosun, Staffs ST1 3DD; M McSwiggan, Channel Islands; Max Glickman, London NW6 1ET; Andrew Dunn, London SW1V 3HQ; Steven McCrea, Northern Ireland BT4 3DZ; Peter Young, Lancs OL3 5EG; Stephen Dawkins, Leices LE15 9RR; PA James, S Glam CF6 8FG; Chris Garbutt, Essex SS13 1RR; James Blomfield, Essex CO7 6SQ; John Shaw, Cheshire SK16 4NB; Billy Ormiston, Edinburgh EH7 5UN; Philip Davies, Cornwall TR11 2PN; T Harston, Cleveland TS12 2ND; RP Annis, Manchester M20 8SB; Jonathan Burton, Surrey RH3 7JZ, Fiona Bissett, London N14 5PT.

FIREFLY COMPETITION

Winner: Tristram Moore, Surrey RH7 6QY.

Runners-up: Andrew Magee, Manchester M34 2DW; Stephen Boyd, Surrey KT17 2BU; Russel Smith, Kent TN4 8LJ; Simon Maxwell, Channel Islands; Michael Finbon, Cambridge CB2 4TD; JK Marston, Dorset BH22 9RH; Mark Sheldrake, Peterborough PE6 0QS; Charn Uawithya, East Sussex TN6 3LG; Danny Keller, Cheshire WA15 0NS; David James Sullivan, W Midlands WS1 3AX; Edward O'Kane, Scotland PA14 6HR; Jonathan Burr, W Midlands B93 8ED; Adam Patacchtola, Herts AL5 1JW; Leroy Bagwell, Devon EX10 0DU; Kieran De Roe, Cork City, Ireland; KP Foster, Cleveland TS18 3LH; Michael Poynter, Derbys, DE5 2HW; Justin Hewitt, Staffs ST18 0PQ; Stephan Candler, York YO2 2JF; Stuart Brown, W Yorks LS8 4BY; Austin Brown, Herts CM23 1AU; Tim Lewis, Worcs WR14 4XD; Carl Goulton, Norfolk NR29 4NR; Simon Penfold, Gwent NP2 1GD; Adam Fletcher, Glos GL50 2TD.

SPYCATCER COMPETITION

C Norton, Cambs PE15 8BT; Pierre Scotney, Bristol BS20 8BQ; David Brown, S Humbs DN37 0LA; Paul Hobbs, Hants SO1 5RP; Stephen Dawkins, Leics LE15 9RR; Jonathan Williams, Surrey SM1 4JH; T Harston, Cleveland TS12 2ND; Niel Farrow, Essex IG2 6JQ; Ian Etheridge, Leeds LS11 6NN; Kevin Roe, Suffolk NR32 3JD; James Woodley, Berks SL2 2PZ; Neil Comerford, Coventry CV2 2GP; Sue Watters, Milton Keynes MK14 5HD; G Ross, Oxford OX9 6RU; B Weatherstone, Kent; PH Parker, Leeds LS15 8EY; S Sayers, Glos GL15 5LJ; Glasgow G65 8BB; David Coverley, Cleveland TS11 6DG; J Shearing, Surrey RH9 8NE.

CAPTAIN BLOOD COMPETITION

Winner: Andrew Gores, Hants GU34 5AJ.

Runners-up: Paul Wagland, London E4; Daniel Rolfe, Lincs PE11 3PE; Sid Sayers, Surrey KT15 2PQ; Alex Balcanquall, Stoke-On-Trent ST3 7US; Graham Marion, Kent DA5 1NS; Jeremy Fenton, Oxon OX14 1LU; Mike Clark, Dorset BH19 1DU; Jonathan Igleisions, London SW8 3TZ; Michael Percy, Essex RM7 0QR; Paul Knaggs, Herts EN8 8RF.

. . . AND NOW TGM006 . . .

WIN AN AMIGA (III)

Winner receives an Amiga A500 and 1081 colour monitor, and he is **Ian Stone**, W Mids B65 9RG. Well done Ian!

BIONIC COMMANDOS

GO! offered an Omnibot 2000 Robot and a copy of Bionic Commandos, which goes to **Vikki Yeates**, Avon BA2 2HU.

Runners-up (get a Spotbot and game): Steven McCrea, N Ireland BT4 3DZ; Richard Dike, Kent TN8 6AB; Christopher Shimadry, Surrey KT15 2JB; Philip Leung, Cleveland TS18 2HX; B Brailsford, Staffs WS15 2QP.

And the rest get the game: Ronald Farrington, Wirral L43 7YN; Scott Dyson, Birmingham B42 2EL; Andrew Martin, Manchester M9 2DS; Timothy Shuttleworth, Cleveland TS6 9DG; Simon Paling, Birmingham B28 0JU; Simon Cooper, E.Sussex TN34 2AZ; Daniel Legden, Bathgate EH48 4BB; J Temple, Essex CO3 4PE; JR Morrice, Alnwick NE66 1EN; Nik Shearer, Scotland FK2 7HA; Robert O'Gorman, Berks SL1 5PR; Matthew Taylor, W Sussex RH17 6AF; Paul Hobbs, Hants SO2 5RP; Ross Allen, Brighton BN1 7JQ; Peter Carroll, Tyne & Wear NE40 4XF; Jaron Collis, Co Down, N Ireland; Steven Wraxall, Manchester, M23 8HQ; M Baxter, Derby DE3 7HA; Stephen Graham, Cumbria CA2 7QB; Andrew Robinson, Dorset BH7 6LW; Adam Coulson, Birmingham B8 1SR; Stephen Morgan, Northumberland NE42 6JL; Lee Davies, W Sussex RH17 5RD; Mark Dixon, Lancs PR2 1US; Paul Johnson, Surrey GU8 6EQ.

FLINTSTONES COMPETITION

From Grandslam Entertainment, the top prizes – a Flintstone video (VHS), a pair of Flintstones Boxer Shorts and a copy of the game – goes to:

Brian Sherry, Essex SS15 5NG; Simon Colclough, Cleveland TS20 1QJ; Brian Quin, Co Clare, Ireland; Bernard Ashton, Kent TN1 2JP; Andrew Tate, Tyne & Wear NE25 9UY.

And the five second place prizes go to: Ian Etheudge, Leeds LS11 6NN; Ian Fowlds, W Lothian EH54 6PJ; Alex Roy, Milton Keynes MK5 7DA; David Clark, Glasgow G67 1PD; David Barnett, Berks RG3 5YL.

A further 10 runners-up get the game: Paul Cochrane, Dundee DD1 1JJ; Shaun Moore, Devon PL6 8TP; James Hawkes, Surrey KT15 3BE; Toby Dunn, Nottingham NG9 1PY; Kieran Carthy, Manchester M25 8NG; Stuart McKechnie, Maghull L31 5LB; Phil Marsh, Surrey CR3 3JD; Chris Green, Lancs WN3 5QJ; Garry Allen, Surrey SM3 9JW; Merlin Cox, London SE1 4UA.

SIERRA COMPETITION

DB Powell, Herefordshire HR6 8PJ, wins Activision's SIERRA-ON-LINE catalogue of games for his machine. The runners-up are:

C Hovland, Surrey TW20 0NJ; Angus Rae, Scotland PA38 4BY; N Sumner, Cheshire WA13 0QF; Shaun Russell, Co Durham DL4 2DE; Barry Wooffitt, York YO1 4DA; Christine Wilson, Lancs FY7 8BS; Chris Clifford, W Glamorgan SA10 6DL; Stephen Pidgeon, E Sussex TN22 2AX; CM Groves, Essex SS14 1LJ; M MacLeod, Scotland IV26 2YG.

TGM QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you for sending in the questionnaire forms – we'll have details in the next issue. We drew the forms out and the winner gets £50 of software, plus a TGM T-shirt. He is **Matthew Warrener**, Derbyshire DE5 7QA. Four runners-up get £20 worth of software, plus a T-shirt:

Simon Sims, Bristol BS14 0EB; Franky Vancoillie, Belgium; David MacKenzie, Argyll PA34 4JF; Raymond D Midgley, W Yorks HX3 8XA.

Holistic Engineering

P.O. Box 15, Jeata Houses
Northallerton, N. Yorks, DL7 8NU
060983 382

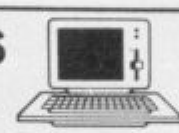
Have your Computer Overhauled by
PROFESSIONAL COMPUTER ENGINEERS

Computer	Model	Repair	Contract
Amstrad	464, 664, 6128	£25.00	£22.50
	with monitor	£30.00	£25.00
Sinclair	128, QL etc.	£22.50	£20.00
48k microdrive, interface		£17.50	£17.50
Commodore	64, 16, 4, Vic 20	£25.00	£22.50
	Any PSU	£12.50	£10.00

TERMS Repairs and Contracts
Labour, Parts, VAT, Insurance, Return P&P INCUDED
Send Cheque & Fault Description with Computer
100 days guarantee on all work
SAE and Hardware list for Maintenance Contract

COMPUTER REPAIRS

Fixed Super Low Prices!
Inclusive of parts, labour and VAT



FIRST AID FOR TECHNOLOGY

1 week turnround

★ **SPECIAL OFFERS** ★

SPECTRUMS	£14 inc. Free Game
SPECTRUM 128	£16 inc.
C64	£22 inc. + Free Game
C128	£29 inc.
C16	£18 inc.
VIC20, C+4	£22 inc.
BBC	£32 inc.
ELECTRON	£19 inc.
AMSTRAD 464	£32 inc. Free Game
SPECTRUM P.S.U. sale	£10 inc.
C64 P.S.U. for sale	£20 inc.

Please enclose payment with item – 3 month warranty on repair
Please enclose advert with repair

W.T.S. ELECTRONICS (GM)
5–9 Portland Road, Luton, Beds LU4 8AT. Tel: 0582 458375. Telex: 265871

ALL PRICES INCLUDE V.A.T. AND POSTAGE

FREE

SCHOOL AND GOVT. ORDERS WELCOME



Deluxe 120 disc capacity lockable disk box worth over £14 (Please state if you want the 100 capacity box instead)

When you buy *25* disks for only *£18.25*
OR *50* disks for only *£27.50*
100 disks for only *£44.50*

*All disks are Japanese Hygrade 5.25 DS/DD certified to 96 tpi. They come with hub rings, envelopes & labels and a unique 5 year guarantee – Great Value!**

FREE catalogue with order, or 50p separately

Nebulae, Dept ni, FREEPOST, Kilroot Park Industrial Estates, Carrickfergus, Co. Antrim, BT38 7BR.

7 Day Delivery
One year guarantee
and 14 day money back period.

Tel: (09603) 51020
FREEPOST YOUR ORDER TODAY – NO STAMP REQUIRED

TRYBRIDGE SOFTWARE DISTRIBUTION

TITLE	SPECTRUM CASS	SPECTRUM DISC	CBM 64 CASS	CBM 64 DISC	AMSTRAD CASS	AMSTRAD DISC
Ace 2	6.50		6.50	11.00		
Allstars (Edge)	6.00		6.00		6.00	
Alien Syndrome	6.50		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Adv Tact Fighter	6.50	10.00	6.50	10.00	6.50	11.00
Adv Art Studio	16.50		15.00	19.00		
Arcade Alley	5.00		6.50	11.00		
Arctic Fox			8.00	12.00		
Apollo 18			8.00	12.00		
Airborne Ranger			10.00	15.00		
Army Moves	3.50		3.50			
Arcade Force Four	6.50		6.50	11.00	6.50	14.00
Athena	3.50		3.50			
Arkanoid 2 Revenge	5.50	11.00	6.00	11.00	6.50	11.00
Beyond Ice Palace	5.50	9.50	6.50	9.00	6.50	11.00
Blood Brothers	5.50	9.50	6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Bionic Commando	6.00		6.50	9.50	6.50	11.00
Bad Cat			6.50	9.00	6.50	11.00
Best of Elite Vol 1	4.50		4.50		4.50	
Bobsleigh	6.50		6.50		6.50	
Barbarian	6.50		6.50	10.00	6.50	11.00
Blacklamp	5.50		6.00	10.00	6.00	10.00
Bedlam	6.00	10.00	6.50	10.00	6.50	11.00
Buggy Boy	5.50		6.50	10.00	6.50	10.00
Bards Tale			8.00	12.00		
Bards Tale 2			8.00	12.00		
Bangkok Knights	6.50		6.50	12.00	6.50	12.00
Bubble Bobble	5.50	9.00	6.00	9.50	6.00	9.50
Blood Valley	6.50		6.50	10.00		
Bounces	2.00		2.00			
B'Dash Con Kit	5.00		5.00	5.00		
Carrier Command	10.00		10.00		10.00	
Crosswize	5.00		6.00	11.00	6.00	11.00
Combat School	5.50	9.50	6.00	9.00	6.00	10.00
Champ Sprint	6.50		6.50	10.00	6.50	11.00
California Games	3.50	10.00	6.50	10.00	6.50	10.50
Cybernoid	5.50		6.50		6.50	
Chuck Yeager			8.00	12.00		
Chessmaster 2000			8.00	12.00		
Dark Side	6.50	11.00	6.50	9.50	6.50	11.00
Dream Warrior			6.50	9.50		
Desolator	6.00	9.50	6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Deja Vu				14.00		
Driller	10.00		10.00	15.00		
Defender of Crown			10.00	12.00		
Demon Stalker			8.00	12.00		
Dark Sceptre	5.50		6.00	10.00	6.00	10.00
Dragonslair 1 or 2	3.00		3.00		5.00	
Druid	2.00		2.00	3.00	2.00	3.00
Echelon			6.50	11.00		
Enlightenment	3.50		3.50	5.00	6.00	10.00
Elite 6 Pack 1 or 2	6.50		6.50	10.00	6.50	10.00
Enduro Racer	6.50		6.50	12.00		
Elite	6.50		9.50	12.50	9.50	12.50
Eye	5.00		5.00	9.00	5.00	
Earth Orbit Station				14.00		
4th and Inches			6.50	11.00		
Flying Shark	5.50		5.00	10.00	6.00	10.00
Flashpoint	5.50		6.00	12.00	6.00	12.00
Frightmare	6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00		
Firefly	5.50		6.00	12.00	6.00	12.00
Football Director	6.00		6.00		6.00	

TITLE	SPECTRUM CASS	SPECTRUM DISC	CBM 64 CASS	CBM 64 DISC	AMSTRAD CASS	AMSTRAD DISC
F15 Strike Eagle	6.50		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Football Manager	2.95	6.50	2.95	6.50	2.95	6.50
Football Manager 2	6.50	10.00	6.50	10.00	6.50	10.00
Five Computer Hits	3.50		3.50			
Future Knight	2.00		2.00			
Freddy Hardest	3.00		3.00		3.00	
Flintstones	6.00		6.50	11.00	6.00	9.50
Frostbyte	2.00		2.00			
Gutz	5.50		6.00			
Gothik	6.00		6.00	10.00	6.00	10.00
Gauntlet 2	6.00		6.50	12.00	6.50	12.00
Gothik 2	5.50		6.00		6.00	
Gunsmoke	6.00	9.00	6.50	9.00	6.50	11.00
Gryzor	5.50	11.00	6.00	9.00	6.00	11.00
Game Set & Match	9.00	12.00	9.00	12.00	9.00	12.00
Garfield	6.00		6.50		6.50	
Guild of Thieves		10.00		14.00		14.00
Gunship	6.50	11.00	9.50	14.00		
Hercules	5.50	9.50	6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Headcoach	2.95		2.95		2.95	
Head Over Heels	3.50		3.50			
Hyperball	1.50		1.50			
Int. Soccer			6.50	11.00		
Impact	6.00		6.50		6.50	
International Karate	2.95	6.50	2.95	6.50	2.95	6.50
International Karate +	6.50		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Impossible Mission 2	6.00		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Ikari Warriors	6.00		6.50	9.00	6.50	11.00
Indy Jones Temple	6.00		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Imp. Mission 2	6.00		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Icups	1.50		1.50			
Jinks			6.50	9.00	6.50	11.00
Jackal	6.00		6.50			
Jewels of Darkness	9.50		9.00	13.00	9.00	13.00
Konami Collection	6.50		6.50		6.50	
Knightmare	6.50		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Karnov	6.50		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Knightgames 2			6.50			
Knightorc	9.50		10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00
Live Ammo	6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Last Ninja			6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Last Ninja 2			8.50	11.00		
Madballs	5.50		6.00		6.00	
Magnificent 7	6.50	13.00	6.50	13.00	6.50	13.00
Morpheus			10.00	12.00		
Match Day 2	5.50		6.00	11.00	6.00	10.00
Mega Apocalypse	6.50	12.00	6.50	12.00		
Music System			10.00	30.00		
Mini Putt			8.00	12.00		
Magnetron	5.50		6.00	10.00	6.00	10.00
Nigel Mansell GP	6.50		8.00	12.00	7.00	12.00
Nebulus	6.00		6.50	11.00		
Now 5	6.50		6.50			
Nimitz			8.00	12.00		
North Star	5.50		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Nodes of Yesod	2.00		2.00			
Outrun	6.00		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Pandora			6.50	10.00		
Pacland	6.00		6.00	11.00	6.00	11.00
Platoon	6.50		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00

TITLE	SPECTRUM CASS	SPECTRUM DISC	CBM 64 CASS	CBM 64 DISC	AMSTRAD CASS	AMSTRAD DISC
Predator	6.50		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Pink Panther	6.00	10.00	6.50	10.00	6.50	11.00
PHM Pegasus	7.50	12.00	7.50	12.00		
Pawn	9.50	12.00		14.00		14.00
Pirates			10.50	14.00	10.50	14.00
Power at Sea				12.00		
Paper Boy			3.00			
Road Blasters	6.00	9.50	6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Rimrunner			6.00	9.50	6.50	9.50
Rampage	6.50		6.50	12.00	6.50	12.00
Rastan Saga	6.00		6.50	12.00	6.50	12.00
Roadwars	5.50		6.50	12.00	6.50	12.00
Rygar	5.00		6.00	11.00	6.00	11.00
Rolling Thunder	6.00		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Renegade	5.50		6.00	11.00	6.00	11.00
Ring Wars	6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Red October	9.50		11.00	14.00		
Revs +			6.50	11.00		
Robin of Wood	1.50		1.50			
Soldier of Light			6.50	11.00		
Skatecrazy	5.50	9.50	6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Samurai Warrior			6.00	10.00		
Star Wars	6.50		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Sidearms	6.00		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Street Basketball	6.00		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Solid Gold	6.50	12.00	6.50	12.00	6.50	12.00
Starglider	9.50	12.00	10.00	12.00		
Sentinel	6.50	9.50	2.00	4.00	6.50	
Sidewize	3.00		3.00			
Silent Service	6.50		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Supersprint	6.50		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Silicon Dreams	9.50		9.50	11.00	9.50	11.00
720°	6.00		6.50	9.00	6.50	11.00
Shoot Em Up Con Kit			10.00	15.00		
Stealth Fighter			10.00	15.00		
Skate or Die			8.00	12.00		
6 Pak Vol 1, 2 or 3	6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Spy v Spy Artic	2.00		2.00	2.00		
3 Stooges				11.00		
10 Great Games	6.50		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Test Drive			8.00	12.00		
Train Escape			8.00	12.00		
Topfuel Challenge			6.50	10.00		
Troll	6.50	9.50	6.50	9.50		
Time & Magick	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00
Trantor	6.00		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Target Renegade	5.50		6.00		6.00	
Thundercats	5.50		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Terramex	5.50		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Tetris	5.50		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Taipan			3.50		3.50	
Vampires Empire	6.00	9.00	6.50	9.00	6.50	11.00
Vixen	6.50	11.00	7.00	11.00	7.00	11.00
Venom	5.50		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Wivard Warz	6.00		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
World Class L'Board	6.50		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
Wonderboy	6.50		6.50	11.00	6.50	11.00
World Tour Glof			8.00	12.00		
Wizball	3.50		3.50			
We are the Champions	6.50	13.00	6.50	13.00	6.50	13.00

Please send cheque/P.O./Access, Visa No. & expiry date to: Trybridge Ltd, 72 North Street, Romford, Essex RM1 1DA. Please state make and model of computer when ordering.
P&P inc UK on orders over £5.00: Less than £5.00 and Europe add £1.00 per item: Elsewhere, please add £2.00 per item for airmail. **TEL. ORDERS 0708 765271**



NEVER MIND THE BALLS LISTEN TO THE SOUNDS

Play spot the ball with ADDICTIVE, win a Midi HiFi system and become a real FOOTBALL MANAGER TWO!

In the beginning there was light and shortly after that came ***Football Manager*** – one of the most popular (and longest-lived) games in the history of software. This June sees the release of its sequel ***Football Manager II*** from **Addictive** written by the original's author, **Kevin Toms**.

Football Manager II incorporates many new and advanced features over its predecessor as you use managerial skills to wheel and deal your way to the top of the football league. Starting right at the bottom of the league, train and coach players or just go poach them from other teams. It all adds up to a super strategy game with the same addictive appeal as before.

TURN THE TABLES WITH TOSHIBA

Addictive are so impressed with *Football Manager II* that they're offering a top prize of a **Toshiba Midi HiFi** system for this competition. Complete with double-cassette deck, five-band graphic surround, radio (FM, MW, LW with 15 preset stations), record deck, two-way bass-reflex speakers and the all-important compact disc player – it's all you could want. Along with that the winner receives a copy of *Football Manager II* (Spectrum, Commodore, Amstrad CPC, Atari ST, Amiga, IBM PC versions available) signed by Kevin Toms, as will the 25 runners-up.

OVER 'ERE JOHN, ON THE HEAD

. . . but preferably in the post box. Once you have discovered all the words listed and ringed them in the Spot The Ball wordsquare, fill in the coupon, cut it out (or send a photocopy) and stick it in an envelope addressed to: **NEVER MIND THE BALLS COMP, THE GAMES MACHINE, *PO Box 10, Ludlow Shropshire SY8 1DB***. Entries must arrive here by first post July 21 and any players who don't follow the rules as detailed in the masthead will be shown the red card and sent for an early shower.

SPOT THAT BALL!
And ten other words . . .
FOOTBALL

BALL	MIDI
MANAGER	KEVIN
TOMS	TWO
TOSHIBA	ADDICTIVE
GOAL	SOCCER

H	I	M	A	R	G	E	G	S	O	L
L	U	L	A	E	P	T	W	O	T	N
L	O	S	L	G	O	A	T	A	N	K
A	O	G	O	A	B	I	H	S	O	T
B	F	A	P	N	B	D	I	V	E	K
I	L	T	O	A	O	T	W	P	U	E
C	I	D	I	M	I	D	O	L	O	V
T	R	E	C	C	O	S	M	O	T	I
E	V	I	T	C	I	D	D	A	F	N
V	E	A	O	D	I	C	T	I	B	E

Name ....
Address ....
....
Postcode ....
Computer owned ....

the GAMES machine

COMPUTER & ELECTRONIC ENTERTAINMENT

LEAD REVIEW

74 ■ DARK SIDE



We've gone over the edge and taken a trip into the *Dark Side* – it's the summer's hottest arcade/puzzle adventure which takes you deeper into the world of Incentive's Freescape routine already experienced in last year's *Driller*.

REVIEWS

68 ■ GAUNTLET II

The sequel to the original romps in on the Atari ST this month. Complete with all the features of the arcade coin-op, *Gauntlet II* has had everyone stuck to the screen.

44 ■ INTERCEPTOR

Join the mile-high club and soar around the landscape of San Francisco bay in Electronic Arts's dazzling, filled-3-D combat simulator, with enough arcade action to keep you playing until the pigs fly home.



38 ■ LEGEND OF THE SWORD

Silicon Software's graphical adventure out now from Rainbird combines atmospheric prose, easy-to-use functions, great graphics, a scrolling map . . . are we seeing the perfect adventure? Very nearly says Rob Steel.

61 ■ THE GREAT GIANA SISTERS

The delectable double-act gets into some heavy platform action, and could be related to a couple of Bros familiar to console players. It's over from German company Rainbow Arts courtesy of GO!

NEXT MONTH . . .

. . . we'll have loadsagames to play with . . . Road Blasters, Mickey Mouse, Last Ninja II, Ring Wars, 19, Skate Crazy, Dream Warrior, Faery Tale, more Bionic Commandos, and we're hoping for some brand-new Nintendo games.

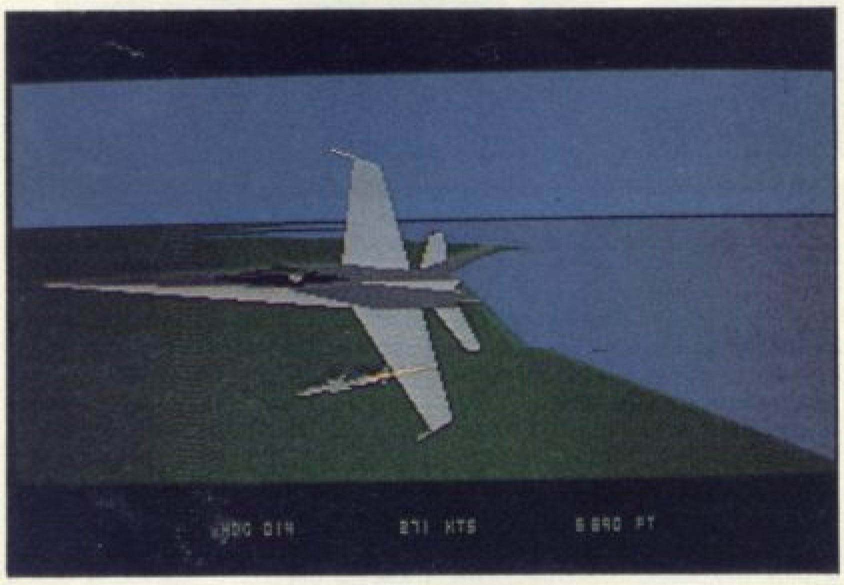
SKIES THE LIMIT

INTERCEPTOR
Electronic Arts

The McDonnell Douglas/Northrop F/A-18 Hornet and the General Dynamics F-16 are two of the most advanced multirole aircraft in the United States flight armoury – and they haven't been ignored when it comes to flight simulations. **subLOGIC** already covered both aircraft in *Jet*, **Mirrorsoft** in *Falcon* and others have flown them too. Now it's the turn of Electronic Arts to take to the skies. *Interceptor* was designed and coded in America by **Bob Dinnerman**.

The interceptor of the title is for most part the F-18 Hornet, though an F-16 is also on standby for certain missions and practice flights.

Options at the start allow for demonstration flights – the computer controlled plane takes the player through a quick flight in the aircraft, practice flights – in which the player can improve on his general flying and combat manoeuvre skills, and the missions themselves.

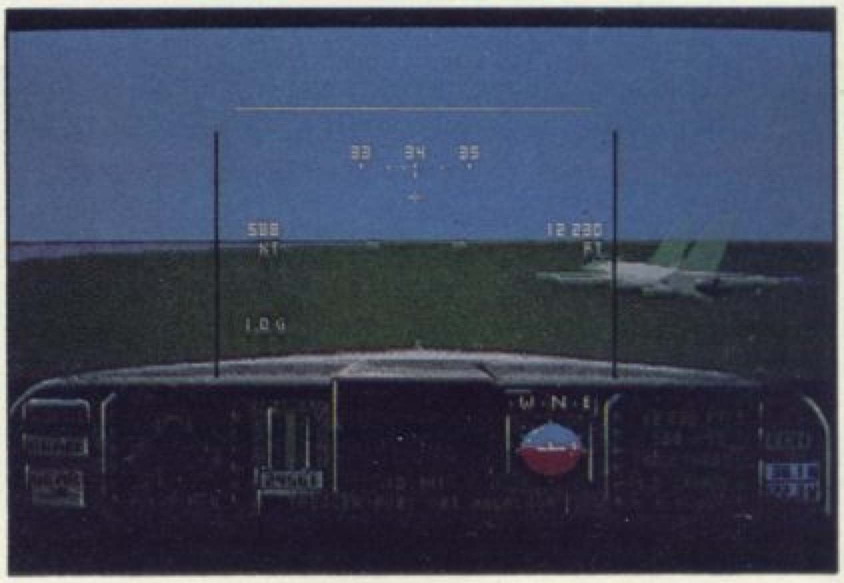


Missile launched . . .

Before you are allowed to undertake any missions, a qualification flight is required to prove your basic abilities: from the deck of the aircraft carrier Enterprise, your task is to take off, gain experience of flight and then land. For the flight, the F-18 Hornet has been made available. Like subLOGIC's *Jet*, taking off is just as demanding as flight and combat. Put the brakes on, power up to full throttle and kick in the afterburners to take off. Once airborne, practice combat manoeuvres and get used to the controls of what is a very agile aircraft.

There's an enemy MiG in the area and experts can opt to tackle it while beginners had best leave well alone! Once proficient in flying, you only have to land to qualify for further missions. Landings are performed at around 175 knots with the arester hook and gear down; the F-18 is a forgiving machine and hard landings are possible. Soon as you're down, cut the throttle or you may fall off the edge of the deck – highly embarrassing!

You can attempt landings from the control tower view, but it's tantamount to committing suicide. If you manage to get the jet down in one piece, your status is saved to disk and the main menu can be accessed to start the first of the further missions.

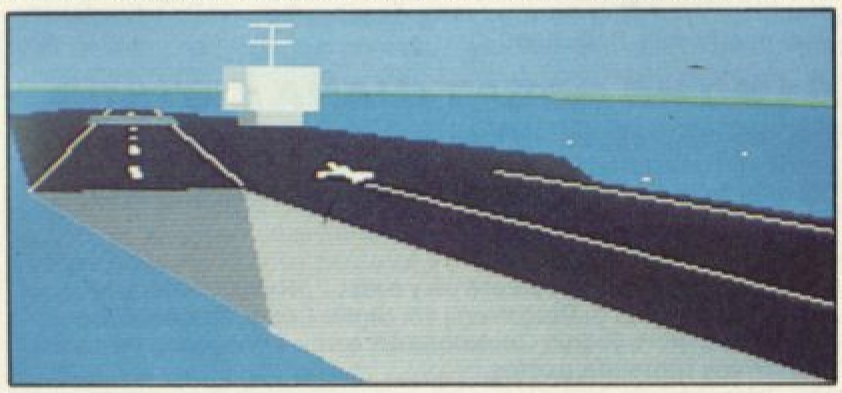


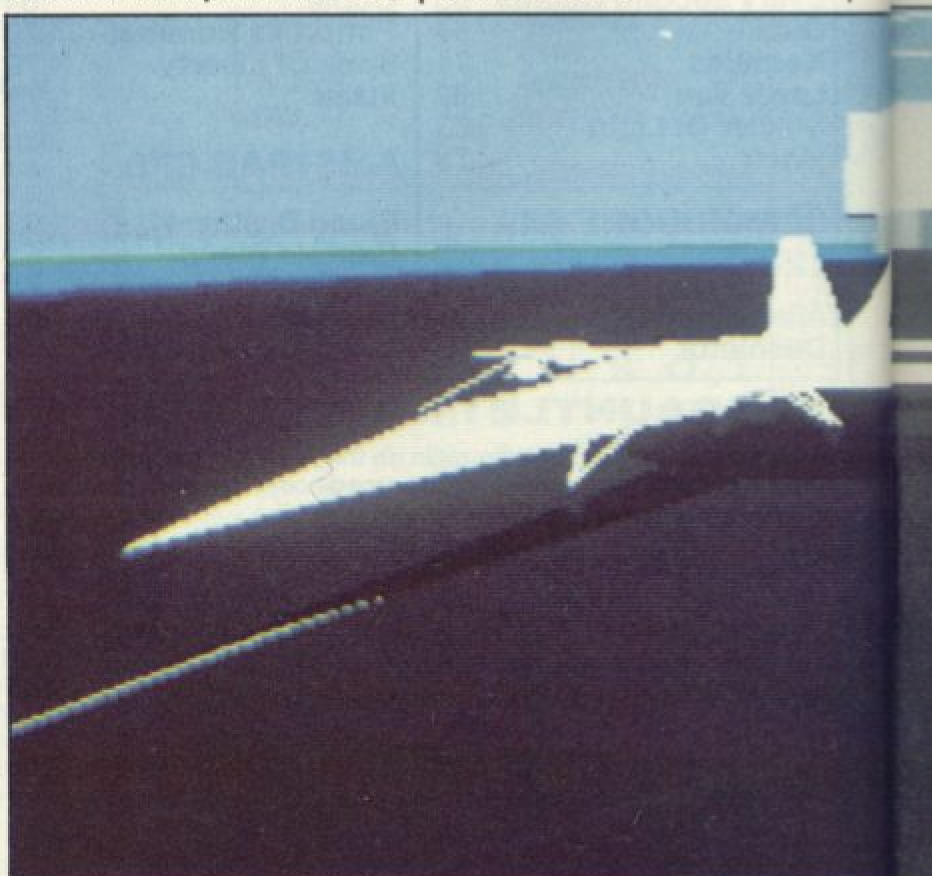
Training is an essential part of becoming a proficient pilot

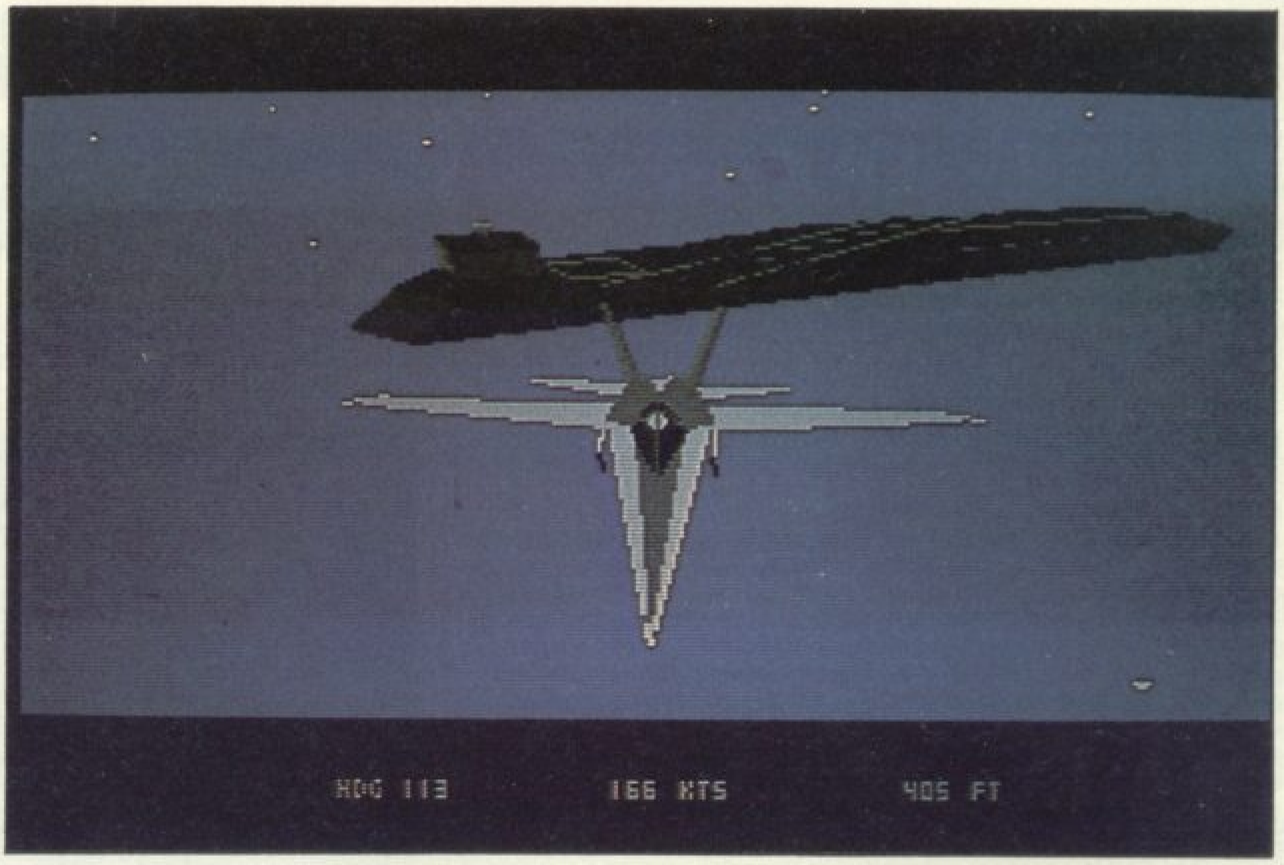
A PRESIDENTIAL SMEAR

The first mission is primarily reconnaissance. An unidentified aircraft is heading for the Enterprise and an F-18 is required to intercept and identify the potentially hostile intruder. The rules of engagement are: do not fire until fired upon. The best tactic is to stand off and use the targetting computer of the missile section to identify the aircraft and then return to base. Those wishing to eliminate the aircraft can do so but the primary task is just to identify it. A good mission to serve as an introduction to the game.

Mission two is a defensive task in which the President's personal airliner, Air Force One, is coming in to land at San Francisco Airport. Two MiG-29 aircraft are in the vicinity and beginning an attack run on the airliner, despite the fact that their actions are likely to start WWIII. The mission is engage the enemy and prevent them shooting down the airliner. However, if you're feeling dastardly you, too, can shoot down the President's plane; the plume of smoke belching from the stricken airliner as it plummets earthwards is a neat effect. The mission doesn't take much effort to complete and is more a test of pilot flight-endurance skills.







Speeding away from the enemy carrier in mission six after dealing deadly blows

PREJUDICED

For mission three, two F-16s took off from a coastal airbase and headed for the Soviet Union. It is your task (piloting either an F-16 or F-18) to bring them back, and if they persist in their defection they are to be stopped with extreme prejudice. F-16s have a top-secret ECM (Electronic Counter-Measures) system, so don't rely too much on missiles to bring your defectors down. To add to the mission's toughness, two MiG-29s are escorting the defectors, there to harass any preventative measures.

Full use of close-range and missile-range combat skills is required together with shrewd use of the fuel-guzzling afterburner if you're to succeed.

Mission four is one of the toughest as the F-18 pilot is required to locate a pilot downed in the sea, drop rescue pods nearby *and* fend off attacks from MiG-29s. Rescuing the pilot is the primary objective as he can only survive a limited time in the water. The mission tests your ability to fly low and slow in the search-and-rescue role as well as skill in combat against enemy jets.

CRUISING ALONG

Mission five tests your skill in taking a direct course to a target as quickly as possible, avoiding time-consuming engagements with MiG-29s as you attempt to destroy a cruise missile headed for a nearby airbase. The missile only takes nine minutes to reach its target, so time is of the essence. The MiG-29s are around to lead you away from the missile as it makes its terminal dive into Moffet airbase, wiping out much of San Francisco in the process.



The final mission is to take out a submersible carrier which has been launching MiG-29s and is the source of all your troubles in previous missions. The instruction manual requests you approach the carrier at under 100 feet so as to avoid radar detection and subsequent interception by MiGs. In play, one tactic we used was to engage the enemy aircraft with guns first before using missiles on the enemy carrier. The carrier takes a lot of punishment so refuelling and rearming is essential.

If the Interceptor crashes, it's back onto the aircraft carrier or airbase runway to continue with the mission. Statistics on aircraft flight are recorded on disk for each mission, such as the amount of ammunition used, number of crashes, missions started and missions completed. Once completed, a mission can be replayed at a higher skill level, the scenario changes (however the substance of the mission remains the same) and the enemy aircraft are superior combatants.

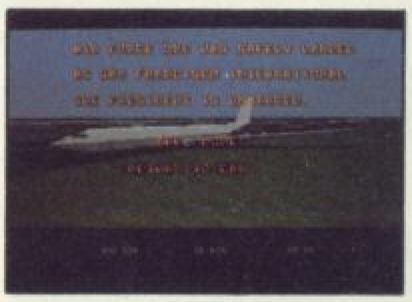
SECOND-TO-NONE

Passive on-board systems include chaff, flares and ECM as well as the more familiar offensive weapons, namely Sidewinder and AMRAAM missiles and a cannon for close range use if missiles miss targets. The enemy are likewise armed with the latest weaponry and use them just as effectively as yourself.

It has become the norm in flight simulations to provide 'spotter-plane' views; *Interceptor* has eight-way exterior views, as well as up, down, side, rear and front cockpit views. A brilliant extra is the ability for the pilot to turn his head round in the cockpit to visually track aircraft and objects in near airspace. Although this has been done before in *Flight Simulator 2* it works much better in *Interceptor*. Zoom-in and zoom-out magnification is available along with a map of the area. The outside views of the plane are nothing short of excellent and the graphics are second-to-none in detail and animation. The plane moves smoothly, speed is kept at a sensible level and you really do have control at your fingertips.

Interceptor combines the realism of flight simulations with the fast action of *Top Gun* (the film) fighter combat extremely well. The solid graphics move very quickly indeed, though not as fast as subLOGIC's *Jet*, but they are far superior in detail, definition and look real in comparison with *Jet*'s simpler graphics. When it comes to realism, ease of control and state-of-the-art graphic and sonic presentation *Interceptor* is the ace.

Mission complete, let's go home



AMIGA
Diskette: £24.95

Sound is excellent, the engine changing tone in relation to the aircraft's speed is well done and the afterburners, through an external view, are awesome (especially with the volume up full.) Cannon fire FX, however, are weak and could have been beefed up a little. If you have 1 Mbyte memory, there are extra sound FX, including title tune and wind whistling past when you eject, but they are minor extras which don't really use the extra 500 Kbytes. Six missions are not a lot, but they are all highly enjoyable and packed with action, and challenge all areas of piloting skills. It's a shame there's only the San Francisco area to fly around.

OVERALL 92%

OTHER FORMATS

Electronic Arts say that no other versions of Interceptor **are planned. Apart from the lack of a market for an ST version in America (where the program was written), there appears to be no reason why ultimately it shouldn't come out on ST or PC.**

"When it comes to realism, ease of control and state-of-the-art presentation Interceptor **is ace."**

RUNNING FOR GOLD

GOLDRUNNER II
Microdeal

The original *Goldrunner* was by **Steve Bak** (author of *Karate Kid II* and the more recent *Return To Genesis*). *Goldrunner II* concerns the reawakening of the war against space pirates in a fast, vertically scrolling shoot-'em-up by **Alex Herbert** and **John Dower**, with music by ubiquitous **David Whittaker** (Rob Hubbard created the prequel's score) and the voice of Virgil Fino rings out courtesy of *ST-Replay*.

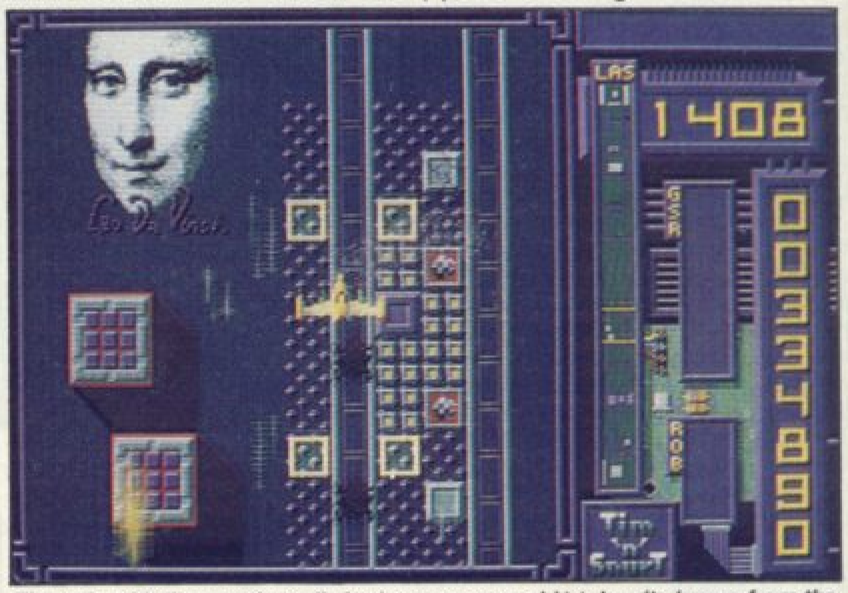
It has been 50 years since Goldrunner first took on, and destroyed, the space pirates of the Triton Ring-worlds Since which time Earth refugees have lived in peace and advanced in technology sufficiently to enable them to create robot defenders. As fast as computers and totally fearless, the robots proved highly effective against the pirates – until they were captured in a sneak raid. Now they are held prisoner on 16 platforms in deep space, heavily guarded by pirates. The only chance for the human race might be if a lone pilot can get through to the platforms and rescue the robots.

As in *Goldrunner*, your ship moves speedily over the vertically scrolling platforms, dodging protruding towers and buildings. There are fewer towers than in the original, but they are just as lethal. Robots travel around tracks in transporter cars and shooting cars releases a robot but also alerts a recovery craft which picks the robot up. Destroy the craft and you can collect the robot – speed is essential as it disintegrates within seconds. Up to five robots can be carried at any one time, to rescue more, you have to drop robots into teleporter canisters from where they are returned to the safety of the Ring-worlds.

FASTER, BUT . . .

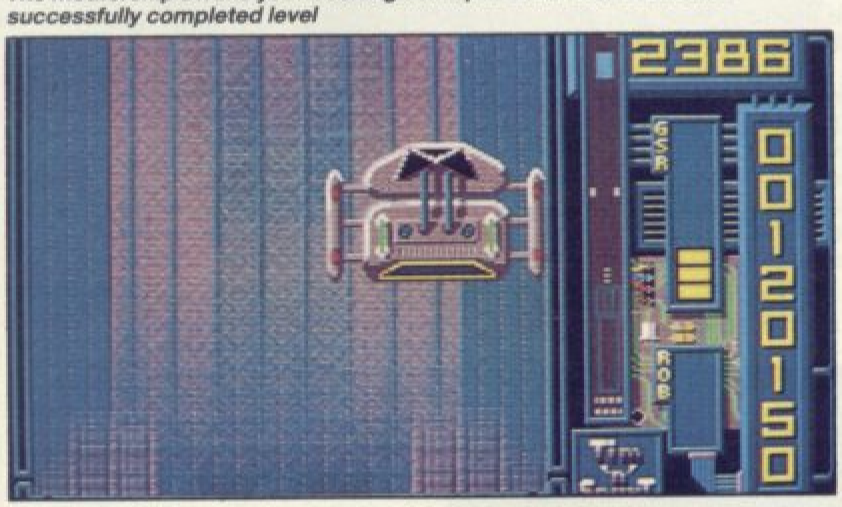
The defence systems, recovery ships and fighters cannot directly destroy your ship, but their shots invariably deflect you in to a building – which does destroy the craft. Radioactive dust clouds absorb your lasers, while dallying too long on each platform brings in a mothership carrying enemy fighters. Smart bombs occasionally fly down the screen; collecting and using them destroys everything on the platform except for the more powerful enemy ships. Once all robots are collected or destroyed a friendly mothership comes into view and docking with it takes you on to the next platform.

Goldrunner II is noticeably faster than its predecessor (which was fast indeed), and it's considerably more colourful and varied. But improvement though it may be graphically, it offers precious little more: the base formula is limited, and as it's the same throughout all 16 levels, the repetitive gameplay and only average challenge soon tell. There are many shoot-'em-ups for the ST, and even with its quality presentation, *Goldrunner II* just doesn't have the holding power of such games as *Xenon*.



The lady with the mystic smile looks on as your ship takes its lumps from the enemy – ST screens

The mothership awaits your docking attempts at the end of another successfully completed level



ATARI ST Diskette: £19.95

Microdeal are also offering two data disks at £5.95 each, containing further platforms with different scrolling backgrounds. These are merely graphical reworkings of the existing platforms and offer nothing new in play variation but they may well appeal to those who want to get the most out of the game.

OVERALL 65%

OTHER FORMATS

Look out for an Amiga version in the very near future – same price as Atari ST.

" . . . faster than its predecessor, but repetitive gameplay and only average challenge soon tell."

VERSION UPDATE

REVENGE II
Mastertronic
Atari ST, Diskette: £9.99

THISis the third in Jeff Minter's *Camels* series and was originally released by **M.A.D.** for the Commodore 64 where it earned a ZZAP! Silver Medal. The camels are in fact 90-foot mutants known as MetaBeasts originally developed by humans to fight in an interstellar war. After several, ultimately successful clashes with the Zzyaxian enemy, the MetaBeasts went into hibernation for six millennia until the Zzyaxian threat once more loomed over the galaxy.

Revenge II begins by presenting the Wave Select Grid with 100 horizontally-scrolling waves ultimately available to the player. At the start of the game, however, you can only select the first wave. The MetaBeast's weapons are laser bullets and bombs, the latter being released when the MetaBeast takes off. At first the control system is a little awkward, but practice solves this. A more serious flaw is the presentation which is uniformly mediocre: Minter's psychedelic *Pac-Man* ghosts, deadly washing machines and vicious Amiga disks all seem very flat and 2-D. Sonics are similarly basic. Nevertheless the essential playability of the combat remains unaffected.


Try not to get the hump as you fight the off-beat enemy in the guise of a deadly camel

If the first level is completed successfully the player earns credits which can be used to buy extra weapons such as shields, smart bullets and even an extra beastie. These last only for the next wave so there's a substantial strategy element in mapping waves so that you have the right weapons for hard waves, and reserve easy waves for when credit is low. This strategic element, together with the need to carefully plan progress across the grid, provides an impressive contrast with hordes of graphically grabbing, but shallow ST shoot-'em-ups.

ATARI ST: OVERALL 63%

LEGO WARRIORS

CYBERKNIGHTS

CRL

Robert T Smith, programmer of *Cyberknights*, is better known as the author of bestselling wargames such as *Arnhem*, *Desert Rats* and *Vulcan* (all published by CCS.) Bob decided to 'test the waters' of his programming capabilities by writing this arcade game. But has he captured the magic of his previous products in this futuristic combat game with the inevitable strategy overtones?

Cyberknights are robotic warriors of the future, android gladiators fighting to the death in battle arenas. Either one player fights ten increasingly more powerful computer opponents or two players fight it out against each other.

The game is in two parts, a designer program through which a Cyberknight is built up and equipment upgraded, and the combat game where constructed Cyberknights are baptised in fire.

WORKSHOP

The designer program is an icon-driven workshop; equipment can be tried out on the player's Cyberknight. The base components are power source, a body to connect up all the equipment (and provide armoured protection) and a head on which firepower turrets can be positioned.

Without power the robot won't be going anywhere; likewise, adding too much equipment with a weak power source also stops the Cyberknight in its tracks. Each unit has its own merits and disadvantages: atomic generators are expensive, bulky but extremely powerful; solar packs are lightweight but weak and, as they are positioned on the robot's head, exposed to attack. Best power pack, we found, is the chemical fuelcell type: good value for money and it provides a moderate power level. Additionally, batteries can be purchased for extra power – but they don't recharge during play – and energy absorbers are another power source to add to the primary system. In all cases a backup system is required in case the primary power source is destroyed or damaged.

The body falls into two categories: plastic and metal build. Plastic bodies are lightweight, provide protection against acid and electrical attacks but prove useless against radiation. Metal bodies are the opposite, heavy and limited in space for equipment storage, but give good protection against radiation grenades.

Packs can be purchased and attached to provide mountings for other weapons and serve as extra armour. Among them are a flamethrower pack and a jetpack, the latter best used with a lighter robot to keep fuel consumption down.

Once the robot shape is finalised, only weapons remain, and how many depends on cost, weight, power requirements and the number of turret mountings available. Once a weapon has been chosen (and ammunition purchased if necessary), a direction has to be chosen for the weapon to face before turret installation.

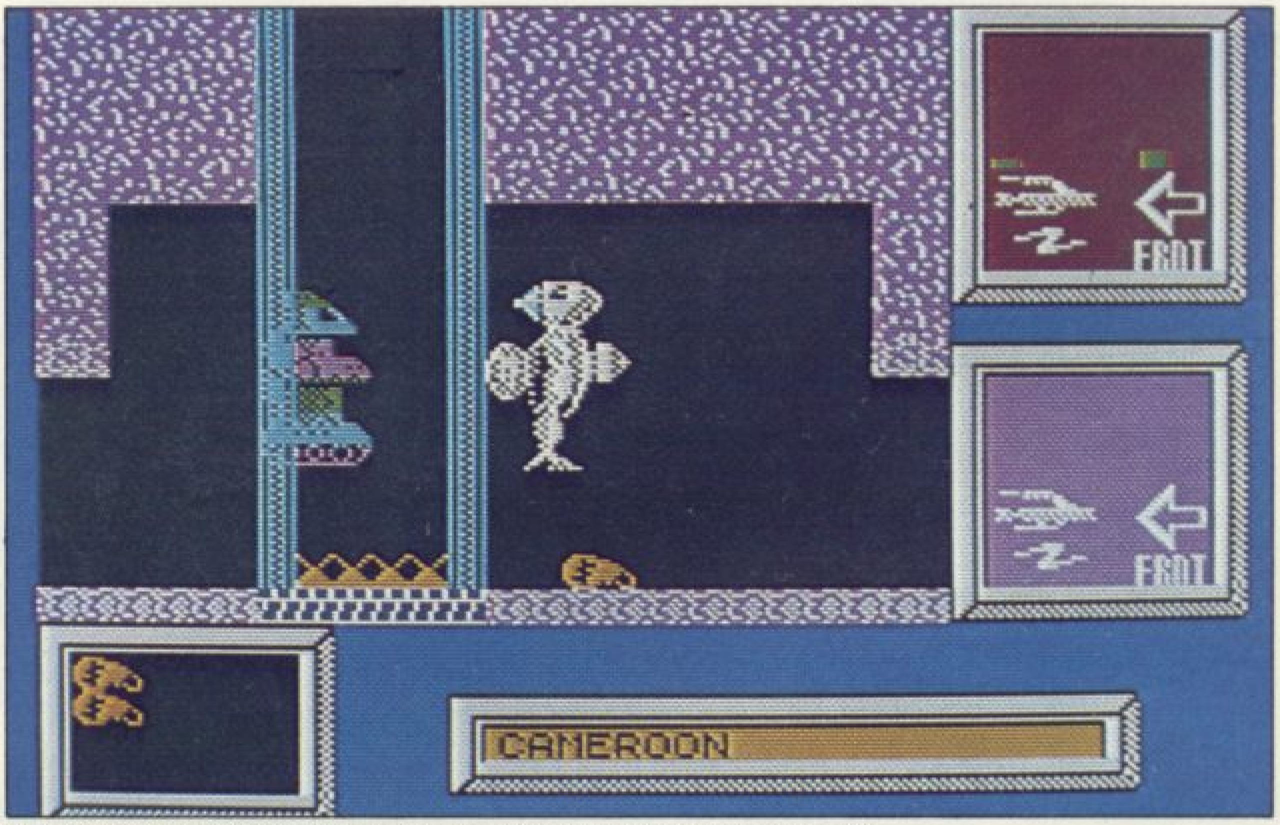
Each component has a fixed space into which the various types of equipment can be added. On earlier levels cost is the determining factor when it comes to equipping the robot but as more money is made, larger capacity heads, bodies and packs can be bought, although the level of power drain rises as a result.

THE GAME

The arena is set over a numerous-flipscreen complex of corridors and level-connecting lifts. Bags of money are conveniently left on the floor. The enemy robot (either the player or one of the ten computer opponents) stalks the arena looking for its opposite number. Destroying enemy robots is rewarded with extra cash, but you need to survive other robot attacks before any money can be spent on improving your Cyberknight.

Waiting at the bottom of lifts is a good tactic, allowing the player to fire up and destroy the opponent's armour before he gets into a firing position. Mines can also be laid to restrict enemy movement. In combat the robot head and protective armour can be lost, but it's game over if the body is destroyed. An alternative method of winning is to ring a bell found within two rooms in the arena: once rung, the opponent must locate a bell and ring it in response or lose the game. If two players are in action, each has their own separate side-on view of their robot and the immediate area.

The designer is easy to use through the icons, although some are a little confusing in appearance. The display is clean and there's a real sense of satisfaction in seeing the robot building up and turning into a fighting machine. The program then falls flat on its face with what is a very simple, below average, multiscreen combat game using appallingly simple graphics, very weak sound and mediocre use of colour. In combat, most weapons are little different in operation and effect, making the hours designing and experimenting pointless. *Cyberknights* may be a technically complex program, but much depth and potential has been lost in the poor gameplay.



It's enjoyable creating customised droids, a shame the game is such a let down

SPECTRUM Cassette: £7.95, Diskette: £14.95

When design and experimentation is complete, finished Cyberknights are saved to tape/disk or RAM and the combat program loaded in. With two players, one must save to tape, loading both combat and saved data. Sound is minimal, especially disappointing in the game itself. Much more was expected graphically and in gameplay. A brilliant idea which loses out in its final execution.

OVERALL 44%

OTHER VERSIONS

No other game formats are expected.

"A brilliant idea which falls flat on its face in its final execution."



YOUR SEARCH FOR THE ULTIMATE

A bead of sweat gently strokes your brow. Fingers tortured with anticipation. Eyes riveted to the screen. Nothing can stop you now. The record score is one carefully aimed F16 missile away. Ready. Aim. Fire!

Oh no! ...... missed.

If you live and breathe Personal Computers there's one event that shouldn't be missed. Personal Computer World has always been the target for people wanting to see the very best in leisure computing. But this year we've set our sights on making it even bigger and even better.

To reflect this new direction, we've also retitled the event 'The Personal Computer Show' and moved it to Earls Court, London's premier exhibition centre.

Inside the specially allocated Leisure Hall will be assembled all the leading companies from the U.K. and overseas. Showcasing the most dynamic and exciting games software on the market.

There's simply no better way of getting your hands on the very latest technology. Feel free to try the games yourself or to see how the experts perform live on the gigantic Pepsi video wall at the National Computer Games Championship.

There will also be daily Personal Computer Conferences covering topics from small business to music, to help you get more from your computer. To obtain more information about the conferences please call 01-948 5166.

So if you think you've given the current batch

TAKE THE PEPSI CHALLENGE WITH PEPSI AN

The Personal Computer Show is presented by Personal Computer World a V.N.U



TE IN ENTERTAINMENT ... ENDS HERE

of games your best shots, come to the Personal Computer Show and discover a new world of excitement.

To attend on the public days (either 16th, 17th or 18th September) just complete and return the coupon with a cheque/postal order for £3.00. To make a credit card booking, telephone the Keith Prowse Personal Computer Show ticket office on 01-741 9999.

Post To: The Keith Prowse Personal Computer Show, Ticket Office, PO Box 2, London W6 OLQ. Tel: 01-741 9999

Please send me my ticket(s) to the Personal Computer Show

No of Tickets ________

Name ________

Address ________

____

I ENCLOSE A CHEQUE/POSTAL ORDER FOR £ ________ (£3.00 per ticket)

Under 18's will not be admitted on the 14th and 15th September as these days are exclusively for Trade and Business visitors.

Under 18's will not be allowed in the business hall.

TGM

THE PERSONAL COMPUTER SHOW

14–18 SEPTEMBER 1988

EARLS COURT LONDON

PRESENTED BY PERSONAL COMPUTER WORLD

The Keith Prowse Personal Computer Show Ticket Office PO Box 2 London W6 OLQ Tel: 01-741 9999

AND AT THE PERSONAL COMPUTER SHOW

a V.N.U. publication. Organisers: Montbuild Ltd., 11 Manchester Square, London W1M 5AB.

24 HOUR COMPUTER REPAIRS and COMPUTER SPARES

SINCLAIR

QUALITY APPROVED REPAIR CENTRE

AMSTRAD-SINCLAIR · SEAL OF QUALITY · AMSTRAD APPROVED REPAIR CENTRE

HOW TO GET YOUR 48K SPECTRUM REPAIRED FOR ONLY £19.95

CALL IN AT OUR MANCHESTER CITY CENTRE BRANCH FOR WHILE YOU WAIT REPAIRS AND SPARES

ORDER NOW USING ACCESS

SPECTRUM (only) KEYBOARD REPAIRS £10.00 THE CHEAPEST AROUND

THE NO. 1 REPAIR CENTRE IN THE U.K. OTHERS FOLLOW

WHILE YOU WAIT SERVICE
CALL FOR APPOINTMENT

NOW AVAILABLE – the official Spectrum Upgrade!

Turn your Spectrum into a Spectrum + for just £24.95

+ £1.50 p + p

THE BEST SELLING KEYBOARD IN OUR RANGE

ACCESS WELCOME

ORDER NOW!

Here's some exciting news for Spectrum owners....
the official Spectrum Upgrade Kit. The Upgrade has everything you need to turn your Spectrum into the stylish new Spectrum +. You don't even need an understanding of electronics, just the ability to solder a few wires together! The leaflet in the kit gives clear, step by step instructions. If you're not sure about doing it yourself, don't worry. Simply return your 48K Spectrum to us and for £31.90 + £1.75 p+p we'll upgrade it for you.

The official Spectrum Upgrade. Naturally your upgraded computer will accept all the peripherals in your Sinclair system-interface 1, Microdrives and so on - as well as all Spectrum software. Just as important, new Spectrum software and peripherals will be designed with the Spectrum + in mind. So the Sinclair upgrade adds **stylish looks, new capabilities** ... and new potential for the future.

The bigger, better Spectrum keyboard
The Spectrum + measures 12½" × 6". It has a large typewriter-style keyboard, with hard, moulded keys. You'll find the new keyboard has a smooth, positive action – ideal for touch-typing, word processing, simulation programs, and extended programming sessions. Two retractable legs give a **perfect typing position.** There are 58 keys in all, including 17 new keys. Programmers will be pleased to see dedicated punctuation keys, a space bar, and separate shift keys for graphics and extended models. And a reset button allows you to clear a program from your computer's memory without disconnecting the power supply.

HOW TO ORDER BY MAIL
1. If you require us to do the upgrade for you please send £31.90 + £1.75 p+p. Total £33.65.
2. Should you require the do-it-youself kit just send £24.95 + £1.75 p+p. Total £26.70.
3. If you require your Spectrum to be repaired and upgraded to a Spectrum Plus we have a special offer price of just £50.00 complete. Orders can beplaced by using your Access/Visa Card on the numbers below.

TEN ★ REPAIR SERVICE

- ★ While you wait repairs £22.50 48K Spectrum. £25.00 Spectrum +2
- ★ All computers fully overhauled and fully tested before return.
- ★ Fully insured for the return journey.
- ★ Fixed low price of £19.95 including post, packing, parts, labour. Spectrum +2 repairs only **£25.00** fully inclusive.
- ★ Discounts for schools and colleges.
- ★ Six top games worth **£39.00** free with every Spectrum repair. Now includes FREE memory/keyboard test.
- ★ We also repair Commodore 64's, VIC 20, Commodore 16 +4, Spectrum +2 and +3.
- ★ The most up to date test equipment developed by us to locate faults within your computer.
- ★ Rubber keyboard repair (replacement membrane only). Just **£10.00** including p+p
- ★ 3 month written guarantee on all repairs.

TRADE REPAIRS most welcome

BEST SERVICE – BEST PRICES!

ARE YOU ANOTHER CUSTOMER - fed up waiting weeks for your estimate?

Need your computer repaired fast? Then send it now to the **Number One Repair Company in the U.K.**, or call in and see us at our fully equipped 2,500 square foot workshop, with all the **latest test equipment available**. You are more than welcome. We will repair your computer while you wait and help you with an· of your technical problems. Commodore computers repaired for only **£35.00**. Please note we gove you a 100% **low fixed price of £19.95** which includes return post and packing, VAT, not a between price like some other Repair Companies offer. We don't ask you to send a cheque in for the maximum amount and **shock you** with repair bills **£30** upwards. Don't forget we are Amstrad aproved for quality and speed, don't risk your compu*er to any other unauthorised repair centre. We dont just repair the fault and send your computer back, we give your computer a:-

FREE OVERHAUL WITH EVERY REPAIR WE DO:-

We correct **colour, sound, keyboard, check the loading and saving chip**, even put new feet on the base if required. Check for full memory, check all sockets including ear/mike and **replace where needed. All for an inclusive price of £19.95 which includes VAT, parts & labour, return post, packing & insurance. No hidden extras whatsoever.**
(Should a computer be classed as unrepairable due to tampering we may be able to offer a replacement circuit board at additional charge.)

URGENT NOTICE Don't be misled by adverts showing 'between prices.' A recent complaint against a Manchester repair firm, Mancomp, was upheld by the Advertising Standards Authority on two counts, "It had stated BBC repairs between £14 and £45 then charged the customer £85." Their guarantee policy was misleading as it did not make clear that all repairs were not covered.

EXTENSION RIBBON
56 Way ribbon cable to extend your ports for your peripherals **£10.95** plus £1.75 p&p

JOYSTICK & INTERFACE PACK
The Cheetah 125+ Rapid Fire Joystick and Ram Dual Port Turbo Interface.
Recommended retail price £20.90
Special offer price **£18.95**
Items can be purchased separately, Ram Dual Port Turbo Interface **£12.95** + £1.75 p&p
125+ Joystick **£7.95** £1.75 p&p

SPECTRUM REPLACEMENT POWER SUPPLY UNIT
Brand new design
Power supply for your **Spectrum** doesn't even need a plug, only £10.95 + 1.75 p+p

ZX81 SPARES NOW IN STOCK

KEYBOARD MEMBRANES
Spectrum keyboard membranes
£5.50 plus £1.75 p&p
Spectrum Plus spare keyboard membranes £12.90 plus £1.75 p&p

COMMODORE 64/VIC POWER SUPPLY UNIT
Developed by us – is ⅓ size of conventional power supplies Just **£29.00** + 1.75 p+p

ON-OFF SWITCHES
FOR THE SPECTRUM AND SPECTRUM +
ORDER No.
1067 SPECTRUM
1067A SPECTRUM+
£4.95 + 1.75 p + p

NEW SPECTRUM + 3 CASSETTE LEADS
LOAD YOUR CASSETTE SOFTWARE INTO YOUR +3 USING THESE LEADS.
ONLY **£4.50** £1.75 p&p

USE ANY JOYSTICK WITH YOUR SPECTRUM + 2
SINCLAIR JOYSTICK ADAPTOR FOR CONNECTING SPECTRUM +2 COMPUTERS TO MOST JOYSTICKS

ORDER No 1062 SELECTOR CONNECTOR R R P £5.95 + 1.75 p + p

NEW THE VIDEOVAULT COMPUTER COMPANION EDITION NOW HOT OFF THE PRESS

New bigger catalogue now available containing over 2,500 items including software for all computers, joysticks, spare parts, business software, books, plus many more. Just send 3×18p stamps for your free copy. Over 20 pages full of top quality products delivered to your door by return post.

POST + PACKING CHARGES UK ONLY
OVERSEAS POST + PACKING CHARGES PLEASE WRITE FOR QUOTE

FULLY REPAIRED AND TESTED ON MOST ADVANCED TEST EQUIPMENT IN EUROPE!

VideoVault Ltd.

Old Kingsmoor School, Railway Street, Hadfield, Hyde, Cheshire SK14 8AA
Tel: 04574 66555/67761/69499 Main Office, enquiries and orders only.
Manchester telephone 061-236 0376 While you wait centre only.
We regret the Manchester Branch cannot take mail order orders, please use main office number

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK MANCHESTER MON-SAT ONLY

NOW SPECIAL OFFER

PLUS BONUS 6 GREAT FREE GAMES FREE TESTER ON EACH TAPE TO TEST YOUR KEYBOARD, MEMORY TEST.
NORMAL RECOMMENDED RETAIL PRICE £39.00 YOURS FREE WITH EVERY SPECTRUM REPAIR

FAX No. 04574 68946

A-Z OF SPACE

SUNDOG
Mirrorsoft

After enjoying critical and popular success with **FTL Games**'s *Oids* and *Dungeon Master*, Mirrorsoft now reaches into the past for the American company's backcatalogue to release *SunDog*. It first appeared in the UK a couple of years ago at the £40 mark; Mirrorsoft now make it available at virtually budget price for the ST.

Resigned to spending his life working for a pittance in the glass mines, Zed's fortunes change when an unknown uncle dies leaving him a SunDog freighter in the inheritance. On collecting the freighter Zed learns that his uncle had contracted to build a new colony for the Society of the New Faith. For Zed to fulfill this contract he must first locate the colony of Banville, find, purchase and ship in all the required materials, then track down all the cryogenically frozen disciples and deliver them to the colony.

SunDog begins by showing an overhead view of Zed standing in the forward section of the freighter. To operate the SunDog Zed must be guided, by mouse, to various positions in the ship where screens can be accessed. Pressing the left button calls up a character status window which shows details of Zed's health; the window also has a compass, watch and a variety of 'hold' positions. The latter allow Zed to carry objects or, by dragging an object onto the correct mark, eat, wear or simply carry an object in hand. If Zed wants to be armed for planetside excursions he can walk to the ship's Locker and transfer a gun into his hand. More substantial cargo is held in the Pod Locker where two cargo loads and ten objects can be stored.

PIRATES AHOY!

The SunDog has six engineering bays: Warp Drive, Sub-C Engines, Guns, Shields, Tactical and Pilotage. Each bay is divided into four lines composed of four objects, with status indicators to show faults. The SunDog already has some damage which can be repaired by purchasing replacement parts, or temporarily fixed with shunts. Damaged or fixed parts obviously impair performance and consume more fuel. Since the Drahew Region includes 12 solar systems, 18 inhabited planets and 50 cities, fuel efficiency can be crucial.

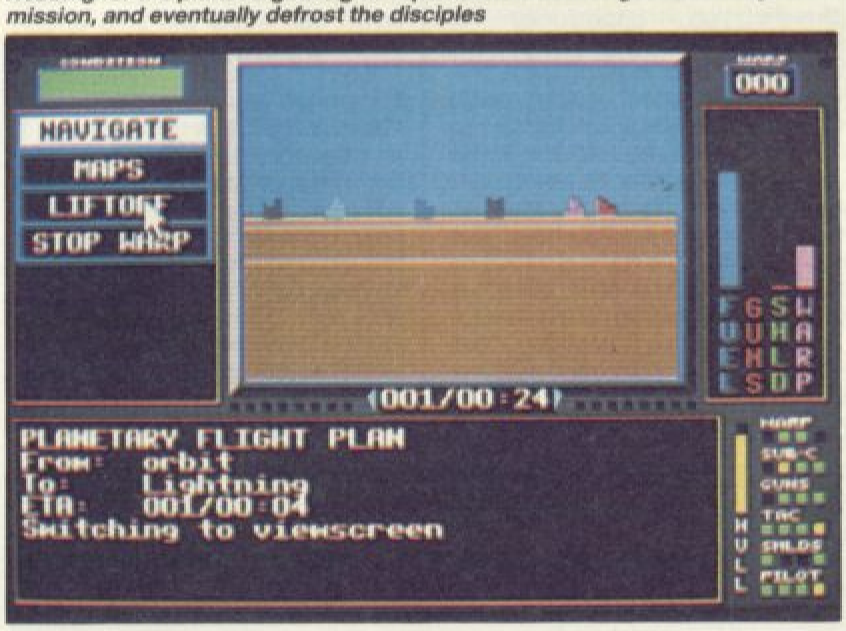
For travel Zed stands at the pilot's position on the navigation screen. Once the ship has lifted off – a dated, purely graphic effect – it must be guided, via the Star System map to a Warp Point where, after the engines have charged up, the next system can be selected with the Star Map. Following another primitive warp effect, the SunDog appears in the selected system and the Star System map is again used to select the ship's destination, and show its slow progress to the planet – during which time pirates may attack.

Under attack the Tactical Screen is accessed and shields raised. But before battle joins pirates threaten, and there's a chance to escape by jettisoning some cargo. Refusal to surrender brings on the disappointing action: a viewscreen showing a starfield against which, using radar, the SunDog is manoeuvred to bring the pirate into the cross-sights. Pirate ships never get much bigger than a dot and the limited gameplay strongly resembles that of ancient *Star Trek* games.

On a planet Zed can explore either on foot, in which case he risks being mugged, or in his cargo pod vehicle. In either case the basic overhead graphics are the same: Zed is guided by placing the cross-sight where you want him to go. When he walks into a building a window opens to show the interior. In a bar, for instance, Zed can sit down with someone, ask for information or buy or sell something. More legitimate trading is done at the warehouses and, as in *Elite*, buying goods low and selling high is crucial to keeping your ship running.

It is a pity that the underlying adventure of strategical trading is too repetitive to sustain interest, especially as the arcade section is also so primitive.

Heading for the planet Lightning to explore and trade for goods to aid your mission, and eventually defrost the disciples



ATARI ST
Diskette: £14.99

The limited nature of planetside graphics and sound are partially compensated for by exceptionally brief disk access times, which makes play relatively fast. With a game of such length it is as well that it may be saved at any time, and a library set up to hold as many saved games as you wish.

OVERALL 63%

OTHER FORMATS

Mirrorsoft are not planning on releasing any other versions.

" . . . the underlying adventure is too repetitive to sustain interest . . . "

VERSION UPDATE

CAPTAIN BLOOD
Infogrames

Amstrad, Diskette: £14.95

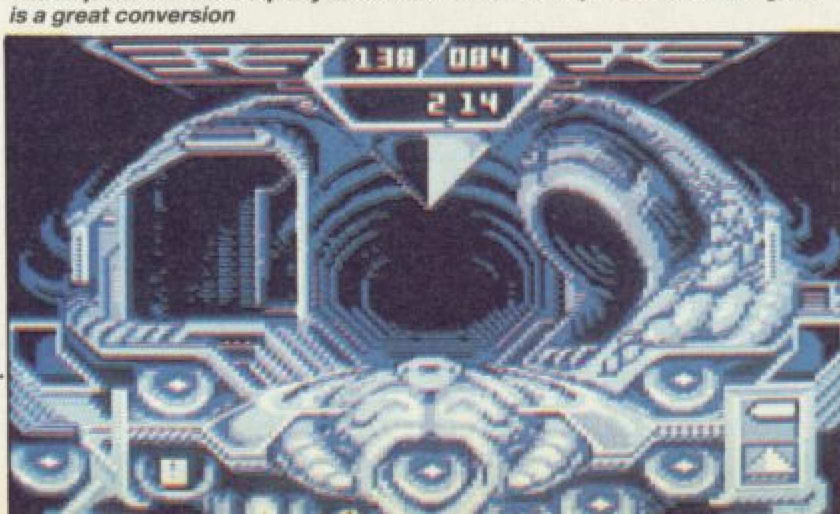
THE bizarre quest of *Captain Blood* (reviewed TGM**007**, Atari ST 74%), now continues on the Amstrad. You're responsible for finding Blood's five clones and destroying them to restore the Captain's vital fluids. Locating them depends on landing via an arcade sequence and then communicating with the planets' aliens with an icon-driven system.

The new Amstrad version is surprisingly close to the ST one. The graphics are inevitably less detailed than on the 16-bit machine, as is the still quite respectable Jean-Michel Jarre intro tune, but the overall atmosphere is portrayed superbly. Flying down to the planet is, admittedly, slower than the ST but still quite enjoyable, and the ability to bypass it by pressing Escape is a facility even ST owners might envy after a dozen or so planets.

Given that *Captain Blood* is above all an adventure – albeit a very pretty one on both ST and Amstrad – there's very little difference in playability, making this a very commendable conversion indeed. Surprisingly perhaps a tape version is imminent for both the Amstrad, and in September for the Commodore 64 with more predictable Amiga and PC conversions planned as well.

AMSTRAD CPC: OVERALL 76%

The ship interior looks equally as effective as on the ST, in fact the whole game is a great conversion



LOONY ESCAPADES

EARTH LIGHT

Firebird

Pete Cooke, author of *Earth Light* needs little introduction, *Tau Ceti*, *Academy* and *Micronaut One* have all been big hits which have pushed the Spectrum to new limits. Having moved from **CRL** to Firebird via the now defunct **Nexus**, Cooke shows no sign of having lost his innovative approach to the Spectrum.

A squadron of the Arcturan Space Fleet was on routine mission, collecting intergalactic garbage for zumtum reprocessing, when an inconsequential blue/green planet caught its attention. Despite the primitive nature of the planet's civilisation, the fleet's Commander felt it was suitable for joining the Arcturan Federation of Lesser Beings. However as the fleet approached the planet it suddenly came under attack from a strange force based on the planet's moon. One by one the fleet's ships were dragged down and smashed on the harsh lunar landscape. Some planets, it seems, are so paranoid they just have no sense of hospitality . . .

Yet miraculously one lonely, and very average Arcturan survived. His name was Slaatn and before he could be as mercilessly murdered as the rest of his comrades, he managed to steal an alien ship. To escape from the moon he must disable all the force field generators. These box-shaped objects are scattered over four levels, each with eight zones to be played in any order to complete the level.

At the start of each zone mission there's an opportunity to rebalance your payload of fuel, shield power and missiles – increasing one automatically decreases the others. This can be very important because in some zones there's a lot of boxes and few robots, making fuel crucial, while in others missiles and shields are vital. There's no way of telling prior to starting a zone what it is like, but zones can be aborted at any time, losing only the point score for that zone and not the game as a whole. This ability obviously makes deaths easier to avoid, but the game remains very tough since each zone still must be played to the finish without loss of life – which resets the zone.

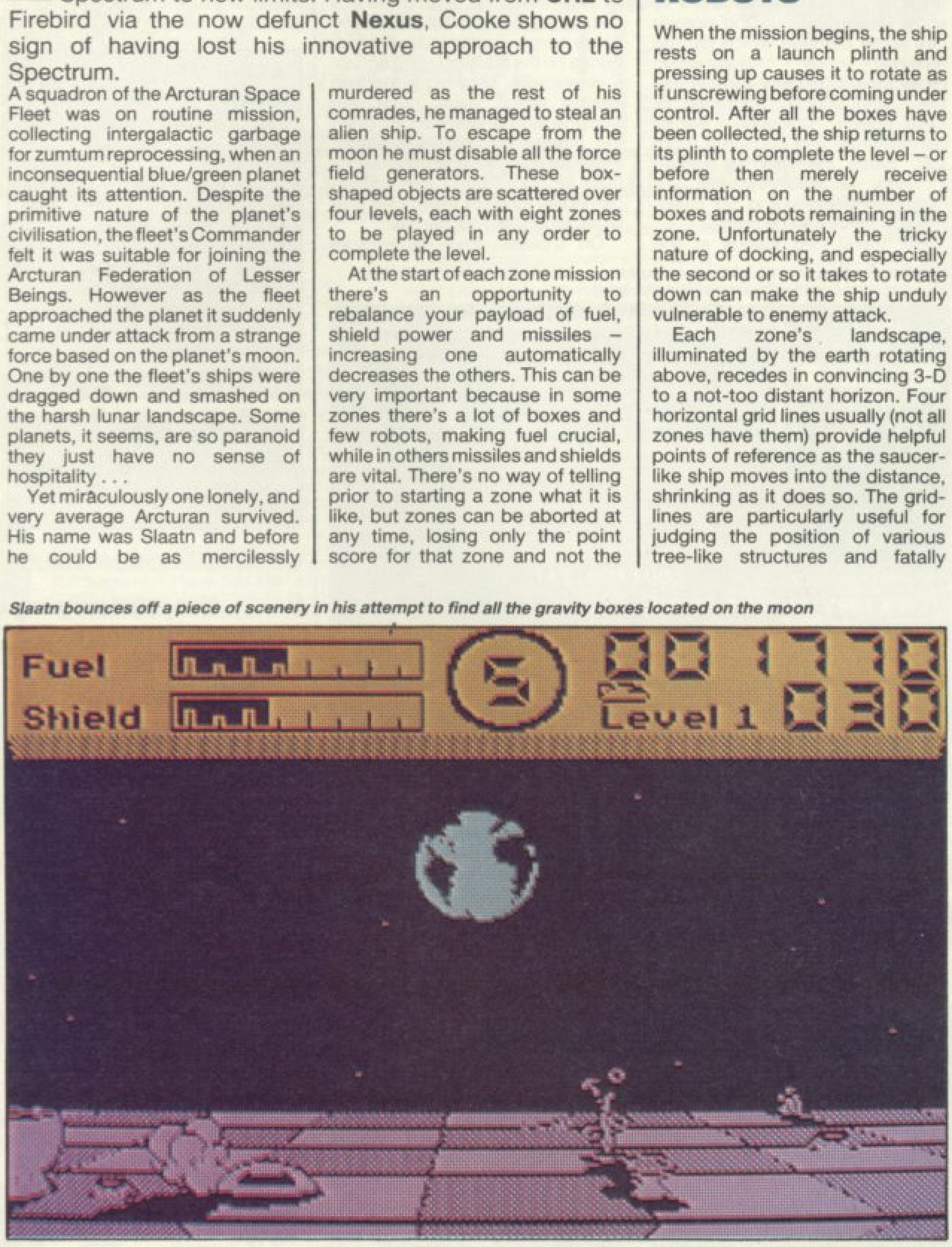
LETHAL ROBOTS

When the mission begins, the ship rests on a launch plinth and pressing up causes it to rotate as if unscrewing before coming under control. After all the boxes have been collected, the ship returns to its plinth to complete the level – or before then merely receive information on the number of boxes and robots remaining in the zone. Unfortunately the tricky nature of docking, and especially the second or so it takes to rotate down can make the ship unduly vulnerable to enemy attack.

Each zone's landscape, illuminated by the earth rotating above, recedes in convincing 3-D to a not-too distant horizon. Four horizontal grid lines usually (not all zones have them) provide helpful points of reference as the saucer-like ship moves into the distance, shrinking as it does so. The grid-lines are particularly useful for judging the position of various tree-like structures and fatally spikey rock mounds, though the latter can be flown over simply by increasing height.

More active opposition to your quest is provided by various robots. The dumber ones simply move into and out of the landscape, like moving gates, while slightly more intelligent robots guard boxes by rotating around them. The most lethal robots are the homing kamikaze type which have to be shot. Most robots automatically alter height to attack your ship. Collisions cause the ship to spin to the ground and lose shield power, but while spinning the ship can still be hit by other robots – both frustrating and fatal. When the shield is exhausted a life is lost and all boxes collected in the zone are returned to their original positions.

Slaatn bounces off a piece of scenery in his attempt to find all the gravity boxes located on the moon



SPECTRUM 48/128
Cassette: £7.95

Graphically Earth Light **is very good, with superb parallax scrolling affecting even the shadows. In play the graphics can't quite conceal a slight repetitiveness of action: even with superb 3-D shooting, a few aliens and collecting boxes isn't superb arcade action. Nevertheless played as a whole, with lives vital for any hope of completing the entire game,** Earth Light **is a compelling challenge, if not quite in the** Tau Ceti **class. For 128 owners there's the added bonus of a tune by Vivaldi and some good sound FX.**

OVERALL 81%

OTHER FORMATS

Pete Cooke's big arcade games have all been converted for most popular formats, and we expect this to be the same, however, there's no news of other formats yet.

" . . . a compelling challenge, if not quite in the Tau Ceti **class."**

BROTHERS GRIM

BLOOD BROTHERS

Gremlin Graphics

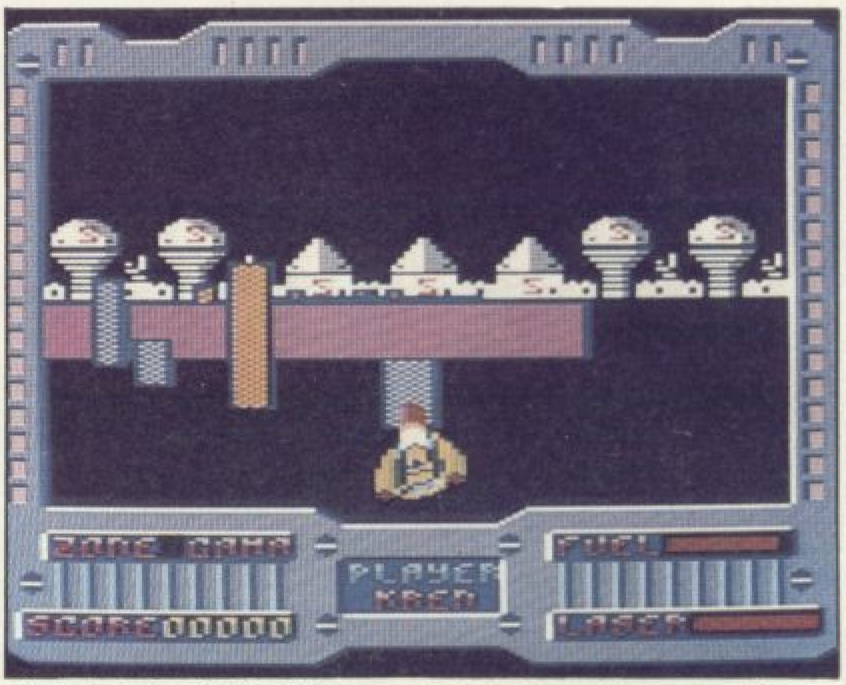
One of the designers and chief programmers of *Blood Brothers* is **Steve Marsden**, who previously wrote the well-received *The Final Matrix* released by Gremlin about this time last year. His latest game follows in the footsteps of many that have attempted to add value by joining several game-styles together.

The planet Sylonia is a peaceful planet naturally vulnerable to the attentions of intergalactic space convicts such as the Scorpions. During a long summery day when the brothers Hark and Kren were testing their new Skywalk Jet Bikes the Scorpions paid Sylonia a visit. Hark and Kren returned home to find it in ruins and their parents dead. After burying their parents the two 18-year-olds swore a blood oath to earn vengeance, and set about adapting their Bikes for the battle to come. When every last weapon and device had been built into their bikes they set off in search of the evil Scorpions . . .

The blood brothers eventually track the convicts down to a mining planet. The game begins with the two brothers standing at the entrance to the first of numerous mines on the planet Scorpia. If both are sent into the first mine, one player can use keys to control Hark and another uses the joystick for Kren. This isn't really recommended, however, because if one player goes off-screen he is frozen until the other player joins him. In addition players can shoot one another, bouncing them off screen as easily as contact with the mines' aliens. The best strategy is undoubtedly for the brothers to tackle mines separately – pressing a key switches between the two.

DROWNING SLOWLY

The objective of *Blood Brothers* is to collect all the gems in each mine and destroy any matter generators. An additional task is collection of stores to replenish weapons and fuel tanks of Jet Bikes and the Jet Packs used to manoeuvre in the mines. Alien creatures attempt to kill the brothers by bouncing them around, and should one of them touch the rippling water a lethal undertow quickly disposes of him. (Since each character has only one life it can be irritating watching him slowly being drowned.) Creatures can be killed if shot five times, but care has to be taken over the gun's recoil. When all the gems have been taken from a mine the brothers can fly onto the next one.



Slowly, but colourfully jetbiking to a mine, in the hope of becoming rich – Amstrad screen

Standing on separate platforms at the mine entrance the brothers can choose to go to different mines, or by standing together to the same one. The Jet Bike section has you guiding your character through a city of blocks, only a few of which can be shot away. At the city's end stands the entrance to the next mine. If the bike crashes, you are sent back to the last mine entrance where you choose between going back into the mine – for Jet Bike fuel perhaps – or making another attempt at getting to the next mine.

On both Amstrad and Spectrum the game is divided into three different modules and once the main program has loaded you can choose which of these three to play and load it. Gameplay doesn't vary overmuch, though, and the general impression is one of two dated game-styles bolted together with only limited imagination.

AMSTRAD CPC
Cassette: £9.99
Diskette: £14.99

The Amstrad has a nice tune and some professional graphics, but the Jet Bike sequence is a touch sluggish while the mine sections are limited and unoriginal. A tough, but average game.

OVERALL 59%

SPECTRUM 48/128
Cassette: £7.99
Diskette: £12.99

The Spectrum has a marginally faster Jet Bike section, and a rather garish mine section, but in terms of playability is virtually identical. On the 48K there are reasonable spot FX, while the 128K has a good tune – although the game modules are still individually loaded.

OVERALL 58%

OTHER FORMATS

A Commodore 64 version is due for imminent release, disk: £14.99, cassette: £9.99.

" . . . the general impression is one of two dated game-styles bolted together . . . "

Deep in the mines of Scorpia, searching for the Scorpian pirates' heavily guarded diamonds – Spectrum screen



RETURN OF JIMBO

INFILTRATOR II
US Gold

Chris Gray is perhaps best known for writing the hugely successful *Boulderdash* game which led to an entire series of sequels. The original *Infiltrator* was released in 1986 to some critical success, and two years later the sequel has finally appeared with the original included free.

It's only months since Johnny 'Jimbo-Baby' McGibbits infiltrated the Mad Leader's military installation and saved humanity, yet already the mighty deed seems forgotten. It is almost with relief, then, that Jimbo finds out the Mad Leader has reorganised his forces and once more threatens this ungrateful world.

Unlike the earlier game there are three missions to accomplish, all basically composed of the same three distinct sections: flying to the base, infiltration and flying home. The first section was exceptionally difficult in the original, so it's a relief to find it a little easier in the sequel – and can even be bypassed altogether.

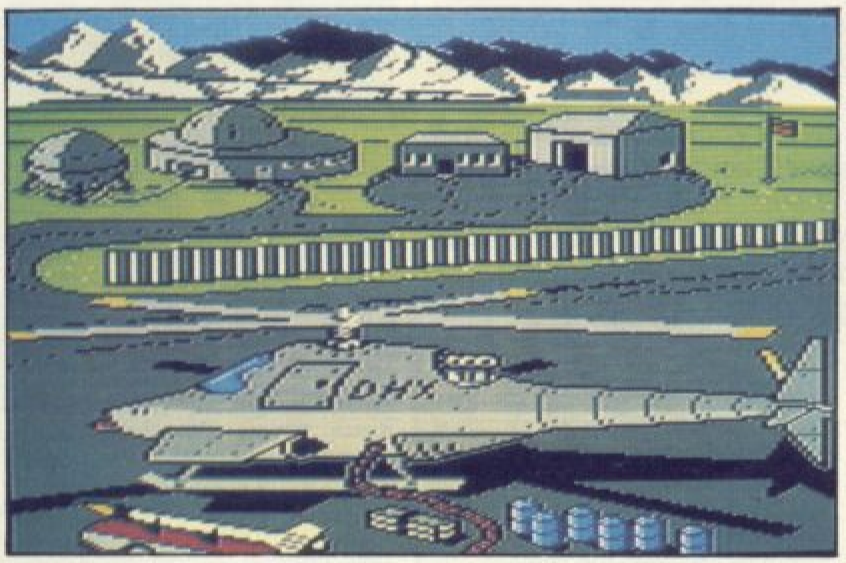
The flight section is presented from a cockpit point-of-view with plenty of dials and warning lights to watch while flying toward the enemy base. Once airborne and having programmed the ADF (Automatic Direction Finder) the main danger is other aircraft. These can either be friends, psychopaths or enemies. If you see the enemy early enough you can ask him for his ID and respond with either an allied or enemy codeword. If he asks for your ID first you must guess at his identity. Psycho pilots cannot be stopped by any ID. During combat cannon, guns, chaff and flares are available to the pilot but manoeuvrability is limited. When you arrive at the base you can land and the next section is loaded from disk.

UNALARMED

In the ground section the view is from overhead with Jimbo standing just outside his helicopter. He carries with him short-range sleeping gas, longer-range gas grenades, a mine detector, false papers and several items for later missions. With his papers in hand Jimbo can enter the base (divided into nine screens) and enter the buildings – though if a guard asks for his papers he must quickly obey or risk setting off the alarm.

Inside the game switches to a *Spy vs Spy* 3-D view of the room. An on-screen map shows rooms Jimbo has explored and which ones might be crucial to him completing the mission. Whizzing through these rooms, it can be tempting not to show your ID and just use gas grenades, but when the alarm goes the enemy pounce as soon as you enter the room and sometimes there's no time to respond. Keys can be found to turn off the alarm and a change of uniform stops the guards asking for your ID, but the section is still a little repetitive.

When Jimbo has completed his mission in the enemy base he escapes in the helicopter. Fortunately you can lose as many lives as you like on this section and still complete the game.



Ready for take-off in the new, improved Gizmo DHX-2 attack chopper

COMMODORE 64/128
Diskette: £14.99

Gameplay and graphics remain virtually indistinguishable from the original, so including it is a little ironic. Without the incredible hardness of the first section, the underlying game's limitations become much more apparent and make this a dubious release. A cassette version will be available at £9.99 – due to lack of disk-accessing during sections – which happens in Infiltrator I **– the sequel should make for a friendlier multiload.**

OVERALL 58%

OTHER FORMATS

Nothing other machine versions are planned.

" . . . indistinguishable from the original, the game's limitations make this a dubious release."

VERSION UPDATE

GUTZ
OCEAN

SPECTRUM Cassette: £7.95 Diskette: £14.95

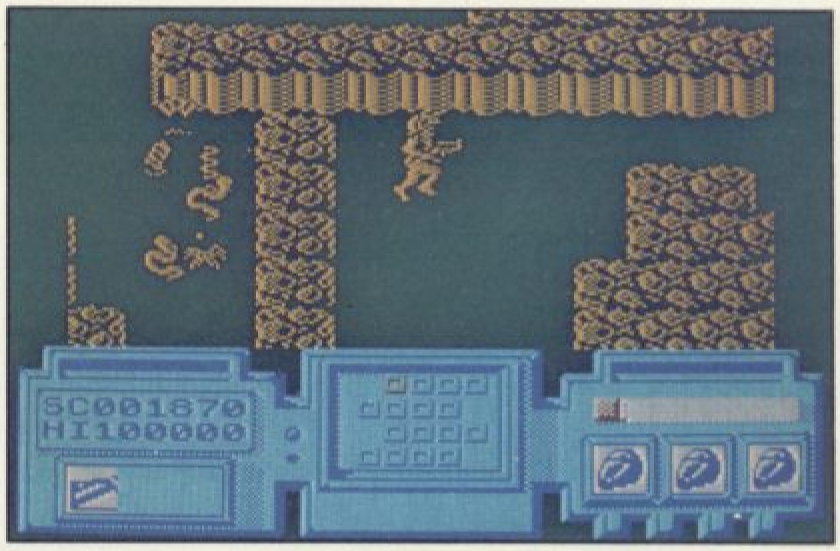
REVIEWED on the Commodore 64 in TGM**006**, the Spectrum version of *Gutz* is programmed by **Jimmy Bagley**, with graphics by **Chas Davies**. The inspiration for *Gutz* came when Special FX's graphic artist, **Andy Rixon** had a medical check-up which resulted in some very pretty pictures of his own guts being revealed!

Gutz is set in the internal organs of a space monster which has swallowed you whole. Gutted, to say the least, you decide on an escape, and the alien's mouth seems the best place to aim for.

The four levels are split into three regions, connected by arterial tunnels. To get out, you need to run through each section of the alien body, collecting parts of a Super Weapon required to defeat the alien's end-of-level major organs. More powerful weapons can be collected en route to defeat the parasites and germs infesting the body. A map can be used to work your way round each level and helmets provide extra shields.

The monochrome screen of *Gutz* adds to the atmosphere of being within the dark caverns of an alien lifeform. The walls of the alien insides are reasonably effective, although end-of-level organs are graphics more in the style of medical views than that of the gory *Alien Syndrome*. The tune playing throughout is really sound effects strung together to form a sort of music.

The eight-directional scrolling is smooth, although it's easy to get stuck turning corners and in narrow corridors, making parasites almost impossible to avoid. The gameplay is enjoyable but repetitive after a while, mainly because each level is the same in style. This together with the combination of a too-large main character, narrow passages and tiny bullets fired by parasites makes it a difficult game in which skill takes a backseat to luck.



SPECTRUM 48/128:
OVERALL 70%

NEW LOW PRICE ST!



ST PRICE INCREASE

Due to a worldwide shortage of memory chips, prices of many computers have gone up. From April 1988, the Atari ST range is also likely to be affected. For details of any price increase, please return the coupon below for our latest literature.

£260 +VAT=£299

ONLY FROM SILICA

Finally, there's a personal computer that not only solves problems like other computers, but also solves the one problem that other computers have created. Affordability. Silica Shop are pleased to present the ST range of personal/business computers from Atari. The ST was designed utilizing the most recent breakthroughs in semiconductor technology, producing a personal computer that performs tasks with fewer parts. Which means it costs less to make. And less to buy. The latest ST computers now include built in power supplies and built in disk drives. The TOS operating system and GEM window environment are now on ROM chips which are already installed in the ST keyboard. This enables automatic instant booting when you switch on. Silica Shop are pleased to offer the complete Atari ST range. Our mail order department is situated in Sidcup and we have 3 retail outlets at Sidcup, Lion House (Tottenham Court Rd) and Selfridges (Oxford Street). We have eight years experience of Atari products, longer than any other UK company, and are well established as the UK's No.1 Atari specialist. With a group turnover of over £9 million and in excess of 80 staff, we offer you unbeatable service and support. We provide several facilities which you will find invaluable during your Atari computing life and most of these facilities are available **ONLY FROM SILICA**. We suggest that you read through what we have to offer, before you decide where to purchase your Atari ST.

FREE STARTER KIT - Only From Silica

When you purchase any Atari ST keyboard, you will not only receive the best value for money computer on the market, but you will also receive the following from Atari Corporation as part of the package:

** BASIC Language Disk * BASIC Manual * ST Owners Manual * TOS/GEM on ROM*

If you buy your ST from Silica Shop, you will also receive:

** NEOchrome Sampler - colour graphics program * 1st Word - Word Processor*

In addition, we at Silica would like to see you get off to a flying start with your new computer, so we have put together a special **ST STARTER KIT** worth over £100, which we are giving away **FREE OF CHARGE** with every ST computer purchased at our normal retail prices. This kit is available **ONLY FROM SILICA** and is aimed at providing users with a valuable introduction to the world of computing. We are continually upgrading the ST Starter Kit, which contains public domain and other licensed software, as well as books, magazines and accessories all relevant to ST computing. Return the coupon below for full details.

DEDICATED SERVICING - Only From Silica

At Silica Shop, we have a dedicated service department of seven full time Atari trained technical staff. This team is totally dedicated to servicing Atari computer products. Their accumulated knowledge, skill and experience makes them second to none in their field. You can be sure that any work carried out by them is of the highest standard. A standard of servicing which we believe you will find **ONLY FROM SILICA**. In addition to providing full servicing facilities for Atari ST computers (both in and out of warranty), our team is also able to offer memory and modulator upgrades to ST computers.

1Mb RAM UPGRADE: Our upgrade on the standard Atari 520ST-M or 520ST-FM keyboard will increase the memory from 512K to a massive 1024K. It has a full 1 year warranty and is available from Silica at an additional retail price of only £86.96 (+VAT = £100).

TV MODULATOR UPGRADE: Silica can upgrade the 1040ST-F to include a TV modulator so that you can then use it with your TV set. This is an internal upgrade and does not involve any untidy external boxes. A cable to connect your ST to any domestic TV is included in the price of the upgrade which is only £49 (inc VAT). The upgrade is also available for early 520ST computers at the same price.

THE FULL STOCK RANGE - Only From Silica

We aim to keep stocks of all Atari related products and our warehouse carries a stock of over £½ million. We import many software titles direct from the USA and you will find that we have new releases in advance of many of our competitors. Unlike dealers who may only stock selected titles, we have the full range. In addition, we carry a complete line of all books which have been written about the Atari ST. A range as wide as ours is something you will find is available **ONLY FROM SILICA.**

AFTER SALES SUPPORT - Only From Silica

Rest assured that when you buy your ST from Silica Shop, you will be fully supported. Our free mailings give news of releases and developments. This will help to keep you up to date with new software releases as well as what's happening in the Atari market. And in addition, our sales staff are at the end of a telephone line to service all of your Atari requirements. If you purchase an ST from Silica and would like any technical advice, we have a full time technical support team to help you get the best from your computer. Because we have both the staff and the systems specifically dedicated to providing after sales service on Atari ST computers, we are confident that our users enjoy an exceptionally high level of support. This can be received **ONLY FROM SILICA.**

FREE CATALOGUES - Only From Silica

At Silica Shop, we recognise that serious users require an in-depth information service, which is why we mail free newsletters and price lists to our ST owners. These are up to 48 pages long and are crammed with technical details as well as special offers and product descriptions. If you have already purchased an ST and would like to have your name added to our mailing list, please complete the coupon & return it to us. This information service is available **ONLY FROM SILICA.**

FREE OVERNIGHT DELIVERY - From Silica

Most orders are processed through our computer within 24 hours of receiving them. Most hardware orders are sent by the overnight GROUP 4 courier service FREE OF CHARGE to customers within the UK. This method helps to ensure minimum delay and maximum protection.

PRICE MATCH - Only From Silica

We hope that the combination of our low prices, FREE UK delivery service, FREE Starter Kit and FREE after sales support, will be enough to make you buy your Atari equipment from Silica Shop. If however, there is something you wish to purchase, and you find one of our competitors offering it at a lower price, then please contact our sales department, providing us with our competitor's name, address and telephone number. If our competitor has the goods in stock, we will normally match the offer (on a 'same product - same price' basis) and still provide you with our normal free delivery. We realise that we are not the only company who will match a competitor's price. However, if you come to us for a price match, you will also be entitled to our after sales service, including free newsletters and technical support. This makes our price match promise rather special, something you will receive **ONLY FROM SILICA**. We don't want you to go anywhere else for your Atari products. So shop at Silica, the UK's No1 Atari Specialist.

SIDCUP (& Mail Order) **01-309 1111**
1-4 The Mews, Hatherley Road, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 4DX

LONDON **01-580 4839**
Lion House (1st floor), 227 Tottenham Court Rd, London, W1P OHX

LONDON **01-629 1234 ext 3914**
Selfridges (1st floor), Oxford Street, London, W1A 1AB

SO MUCH FOR SO LITTLE!

There is nothing that can compare with the incredible value for money offered by Atari's 520ST-FM. For only £260 (+VAT=£299), you can purchase a powerful 512K RAM computer, with a 95 key keyboard (including numeric keypad), MIDI interface, GEM, a palette of 512 colours, mouse controller, and a 512K built-in disk drive. The 520ST-FM has a TV modulator built-in, and comes with a lead to allow you to plug it straight into any domestic colour television set. The mains transformer is also built-in to the keyboard, so there are no messy external boxes. You couldn't wish for a more compact, powerful and stylish unit. Atari ST computers are now firmly established in the UK, there are nearly 500 software titles already available for a wide variety of applications and the list is growing all the time. And that's not all. When you buy your new 520ST-FM (or any Atari ST computer) from Silica Shop, you will get a lot more, including a FREE Silica ST Starter Kit worth over £100. Read the ONLY FROM SILICA section on the left, to see why you should buy your new high power, low price 520ST-FM from Silica Shop, the UK's No1 Atari Specialists. For further details of the range of Atari ST computers and the FREE Silica ST Starter Kit, complete and return the reply coupon below.

ATARI 520ST-FM NOW ONLY £260 (+VAT=£299)

520ST-FM with 512K RAM & mono monitor £399 (inc VAT) **Upgrade from 512K RAM to 1024K RAM £100** (inc VAT)

ATARI 1040ST-F - NEW PRICE

We are pleased to announce a new reduced price point on the 1040ST-F which is now available for only £499 (inc VAT). The 1040 is a powerful computer with 1Mb of RAM and also includes a built-in 1Mb double sided 3½" disk drive. The 1040 has been designed for use on business and professional applications most of which require a high resolution monochrome or colour monitor. It does not therefore have an RF modulator for use with a domestic TV set. Modulators can be fitted for £49 (inc VAT).

1040ST-F Keyboard Without Monitor	***£499** (inc VAT)*
1040ST-F Keyboard + High Res SM125 Mono Monitor	***£599** (inc VAT)*

If you would like further details of the 1040ST-F, return the coupon below.

MEGA ST's NOW IN STOCK

For the user who requires even more RAM than the 520 or 1040 ST's offer, the new MEGA ST computers are now available. There are two MEGA ST's, one with 2Mb of RAM and the other with a massive 4Mb. Both new computers are fully compatible with existing ST's and run currently available ST software. The MEGA ST's are styled as an expandable Central Processing Unit with open architecture and a detachable keyboard. They are supplied with GEM, a free mouse controller and all extras as with the 520 or 1040. Prices are as follows:

MEGA ST 2Mb Keyboard + CPU	***£899** (inc VAT)*
MEGA ST 2Mb Keyboard + CPU + SM125 Mono Monitor	***£999** (inc VAT)*
MEGA ST 4Mb Keyboard + CPU	***£1199** (inc VAT)*
MEGA ST 4Mb Keyboard + CPU + SM125 Mono Monitor	***£1299** (inc VAT)*

If you would like further details of the MEGA ST's, return the coupon below.

ATARI ST

To: Silica Shop Ltd, Dept T.G.M.8 , 1-4 The Mews, Hatherley Road, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 4DX

PLEASE SEND ME FREE LITERATURE ON THE ATARI ST

Mr/Mrs/Ms: .... Initials: .... Surname: ....

Address: ....

....

....

.... Postcode: ....

Do you already own a computer
If so, which one do you own? ....

JASON AND THE AAARGH!NAUTS

AAARGH!
Melbourne House

The number of Amiga coin-ops being translated to home computers now seems to rival original releases. *Aaargh!* was one of the first three **Arcadia** coin-ops and earned praise as very much the best. Unfortunately the two-player mode has been lost in an otherwise superb conversion.



The end-of-game screen – perhaps a little too easy to reach

The island of Darance is a quiet, idylic place which seems very much lost in time with Pyramids, Greek statues and Wild West forts peacefully coexisting on its shores. Such a gentle people are clearly ill-prepared for the horrors of two 20-foot-high monsters out wreak to vengeance on them for their continual, if unknowing expansion into the monsters' territory.

When the Ogre monster, born in the island's north, was little none of the other monster children would play with it. This may possibly have been due to its severe halitosis which set fire to anything nearby, but whatever the reason, the Ogre is now out to claim the island's fabulous golden egg with as much casual carnage along the way as possible.

News of the Ogre's ambition naturally infuriates that other antisocial island creature: the Dragon. It too has been unjustifiably discriminated against because of a passing interest in young ladies for breakfast. Breathing fire, the Dragon sets off to claim the egg for itself. On its way it passes through 12 different cities (each loaded separately from disk), most of which contain a normal Roc's egg. The eggs can be collected, but before storing them in its treasure cave, the Dragon must first fight the other monster.

DRAG ON AN OGRE

This hand-to-claw contest is a fast and furious sub-game which doesn't affect the monster's health in the overall game. When five eggs have been collected the monster can go on to the volcano screen wherein is hidden the golden egg. If this is taken, the search continues for yet another golden egg. Should a city not have an egg then the monster must burn or pulverise every building on the screen to access the next level.

At the game's start you choose to play either Dragon or Ogre, although their capabilities are virtually identical. Both can lose firepower after extravagant use and restore it by picking up lightning bolts revealed by demolishing buildings. Also concealed in the buildings is food to restore health, the state of this is indicated by the extent of the 'Aaargh!' title written above a monster's head; when complete the monster dies in a spectacularly bloody fashion.

The only defence the humans have is a primitive catapult which they wheel around the city. This can be destroyed with a few well-aimed punches, but a more persistent threat comes from the island's giant flies and their lethal stings. On later levels the flies are joined by enormous hornets, flying lizards which spit fire and birds that come swooping out of the distance. If you win all the monster contests, however, these creatures can usually be avoided.



The Lizard eggs Ogre on but he's obviously had une oeuf

AMIGA
Diskette: £19.99

Graphically Aaargh! **is excellent, with all 12 cities being finely detailed and making good use of the Amiga's colours. Monster animation is faultless and particularly impressive in the big hand-to-claw contest, all of which is accompanied by superb sound FX and a reasonable tune. But unfortunately the game is far too easy once the monster contest has been mastered and without a two-player option soon becomes repetitive.**

OVERALL 65%

OTHER FORMATS

Conversions are planned for the Commodore 64 (£9.99 cassette), Apple II GS and IBM (both £24.95 on disk).

" . . . animation is faultless, but the game is far too easy . . . "

PRISONER CELL BLOCK OUCH

STIR CRAZY
Infogrames

The star of *Stir Crazy*, Bobo, is famous in France for appearing in his very own cartoon strip. The writing of a game to express Bobo's unique humour has been undertaken by the same team who programmed the offbeat adventure *Sidewalk*.

For crimes unknown Bobo has spent the last 17 years 'INZEESLAMMER'. His highest ambition is clearly to escape from the place and its drab chores, but knowing Bobo it's unlikely he'll achieve anything other than adding a few more years to his sentence. The excellent introductory screen, which shows Bobo dancing in the light of the prison searchlight, sets the standard for the graphics to come.

Stir Crazy is a collection of six games – played individually or together – none of which have an end, the intention is to score maximum points. Each game has its own high score table, saved to disk, as well as an overall high score table. As many as six players can play in turn.

The first game is *Tapper*-style as Bobo rushes to feed six prisoners in the canteen. There seems no end to their second helpings and should Bobo fall behind, one of the voracious prisoners crowns him with the soup container. Game Two has Bobo peeling spuds, down picks one up and joystick waggling strips off the skin before Bobo tosses the potato over his shoulder – if the potato isn't properly done it's thrown back. There are bonus points for finishing a pile of potatoes, but no time to for self-congratulation as more come piling down the chute before eventually burying our unlucky inmate.



Making a meal of game one, Bobo serves porridge to his fellow in-mates, also doing porridge – ST screen

GOING TO POT

Bobo's next chore involves washing a clean floor, which might seem easy until doors start opening to let in prison guards and dogs who have just been strolling in the countryside. Bobo can stop any of them entering if he runs to the door in time and forces them backwards by standing in front of them. To earn bonus points, he has to mop the floor so that the warden will be pleased when he looks in.

Bobo's task in the mass prison escape section is to run left and right with a trampoline. Rather bizarrely the prisoners feel happier if they get to bounce on the trampoline several times before they go over the wall, so the more times they bounce the more bonus points.

Miraculously Bobo manages to escape, but to complete his dash for freedom runs along electrical wires. Periodically, sparks come speeding down the wires forcing Bobo to jump between the three cables to avoid being electrocuted. If he collects the green cylinders he receives a bonus – something which gets harder as the game speeds up.

The final game takes place in the dormitory where Bobo struggles to sleep after being recaptured. The other five prisoners are happily slumbering, but their snores disturb him, so he dashes from one to another – avoiding the chamberpot – nudging them into silence. Only with somnabulant silence can Bobo briefly return to his bed and earn some points.

ATARI ST
Diskette: £19.95

The graphics are bold and colourful, sometimes too much so – making it hard to spot when prisoners are demanding food for instance. The accompanying tune is suitably offbeat and overall presentation is neat. Gameplay is adequate-to-good, though the inability to finish games makes them individually limited. The best way to play Stir Crazy **is with friends.**

OVERALL 61%

OTHER FORMATS

Conversions for the PC and Amiga are due for release shortly.

"The excellent introductory screen sets the standard for the graphics to come."

VERSION UPDATE

MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE: THE MOVIE
Gremlin Graphics

Atari ST: £19.99

THE the third game to carry the *Masters Of The Universe* title and the first to appear on the ST, Gremlin gameplay remains close to that of the 8-bit versions. He-Man's quest is to recover the eight chords – lost in present-day America – which together will activate the Cosmic Key and return Him to Castle Greyskulle. Unfortunately some of the chords are held by Skeletor's force, only by defeating them can the Key be activated.

The game is divided into four sections, linked by an overhead view of a city infested by Skeletor's soldiers.

Section one – the scrapyard – He-Man faces three of Skeletor's impressively detailed minions – one after the other – in unarmed combat. Graphically incorporating some nice touches, this section has limited combat moves and the responsiveness is sluggish, making for dreary gameplay.



It's not safe to walk the streets – disregarding the danger, He-man strides onward to the scrapyard – ST screen

Following victory, it's on to Charlie's Shootout where He-Man covers a shopfront with his cross-sight and aims to kill enemy soldiers before they do unto him. Graphically nice, the number of soldiers makes it difficult to complete.

The next section takes off from the store rooftop with He-Man on a flying disk indulged in a mid-air battle with more of Skeletor's henchmen. Stage Four is the 'final confrontation' where the muscle-bound marvel struggles to keep his balance on a throne dais while simultaneously seeking to throw Skeletor into the abyss.

Benn Daglish intro tunes and reasonable spot FX contribute to the good presentation; it's unfortunate the basic game structure is so poor – running around streets is boring and the good graphics in the main combat sections fail to disguise poor gameplay. Without any radical game redesign, *Masters Of The Universe* is a conversion that would have been best left undone.

ATARI ST: 52%

THE WHOLE WORLD IN HIS HANDS

THE ARMAGEDDON MAN

Martech

The Armageddon Man was originally released on the 8-bit machines late last year, and now makes a 16-bit debut first on the Amiga; ST and PC versions to follow soon. Authors, **Electronic Pencil Company** previously wrote 8-bit versions of the big hits *Zoids* (Martech) and *The Fourth Protocol* (Century Hutchinson.)

The near future is the setting for *The Armageddon Man*, a future in which many of Earth's nations have formed powerful alliances and become superpowers, each with the capacity to start nuclear wars.

With 16 superpowers, there is no longer trust to keep the peace. In desperation, the superpowers form a single powerbloc – the UNN (United Nuclear Nations) – through which political, military and economic actions of each nation will be directly controlled by a single leader, the Supreme Commander, the Armageddon Man . . . you.

Your secondary objective is to ensure the world radiation level does not rise to lethal levels through nuclear explosions.

In the UNN command centre, a world map shows the global alliances. Five icons are used to issue orders and display data on the state of each alliance. The In-Tray icon holds messages and requests from superpowers; requests require decisions: disagreeing, agreeing or taking a neutral stance over the issue in question, Whatever the decision, it will almost certainly have a double-edged-sword effect. Often a compromise is all that preserves a fragile peace.

The Satellite icon controls positioning of reconnaisance satellites for spying on potentially warring nations and SDI satellites, which can be positioned between alliances likely to start a nuclear war following an escalation using conventional weapons. SDI satellites aren't entirely effective, but positioned correctly, they can save millions of lives and keep down the world radiation level.



The satellite manipulation screen from which you control orbiting devices to spy on potential trouble spots. The cat looks on with interest – paws for thought – Amiga screen

FLEXING MILITARY MUSCLE

The Information icon provides data on each alliance's military, technological and agricultural status. Missile, technology and food mountains have to be eliminated by redirecting resources to poorer alliances – which commands are issued through the Out-Tray icon. Here letters of support are sent to countries adhering to orders, while rebellious nations can be reprimanded or a special UNN force sent to provide military influence and effectively bully the stubborn alliance into action. Hostile alliances can be ordered to improve their international relations, but often ignore your threats if they have low regard for your confidence.

A terrorist group is located within one of the alliances, randomly chosen at the start of the game. It aims to destroy the UNN and the international relations between alliances. You can counter by sending antiterrorist squads into suspect countries, but failing to find evidence dents your reputation as a leader. And it's wise to be right, because the fickle alliances can call a vote of confidence at any time. Fail the vote and your game is over, succeed and you're back in power. Countries often call for a vote if they feel you aren't up to the task of leadership.

The fifth icon – Radio – is used to intercept radio messages between countries which may provide warning of future conflicts. All wavelengths are unknown at the game's start, so a frequency scan is often needed to locate messages and then they need unscrambling if radio filters are used.

A map and alliance sticker flags are supplied with the game to keep track of the many complex inter-alliance relations. A useful extra which eliminates the need for pen and paper.

The Armageddon Man tries to strike a balance between extremely complex strategy and introductory play and works well. A shame, then, that there is a lack of credibility. The alliances formed are realistic, but the way they operate isn't, and in play it's often difficult to determine an alliance's political stance over certain issues. At times it's more luck than skill that's involved in making the right decision. Countries attack each other with little provocation and others form the most unusual alliances, (the Eastern Block formed an alliance with America in one particular game). All this makes *The Armageddon Man* unsatisfying to play.

AMIGA
Diskette: £19.99

Good use of the sound chip, with ominous music playing when a war starts and a triumphant fanfare when you're given the vote of confidence. The graphics are a great improvement on 8-bit versions, although some extras are a little irrelevant (such as the cat.) Shame the strategy is as unpredictable as the 8-bit game. Full RAMLOAD and RAMSAVE game position options are given along with a final Quit game option.

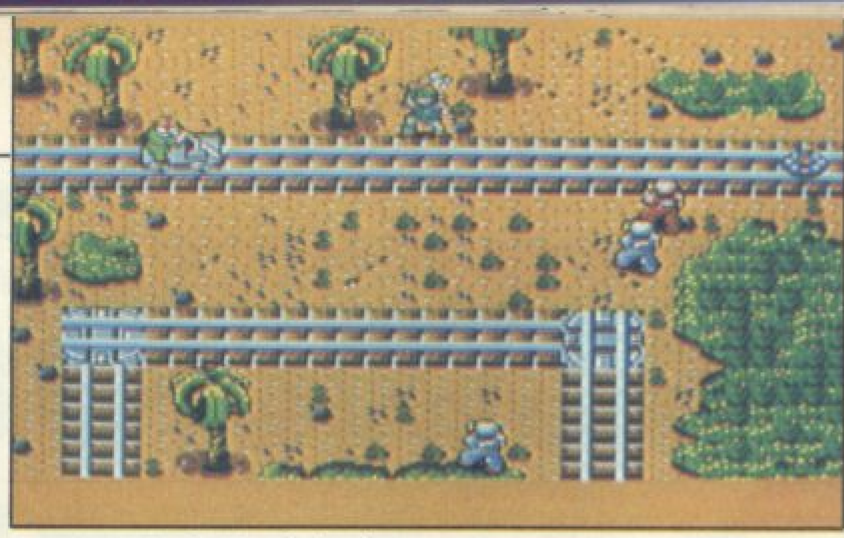
OVERALL 54%

OTHER FORMATS

Also available soon for Atari ST, IBM PC and the Amstrad PCW; all disks priced at £19.99

" . . . it's more luck than skill that's involved in making the right decision."

LIGHT WARS



Keeping on the right tracks in order to rescue comrades and earn yourself a medal

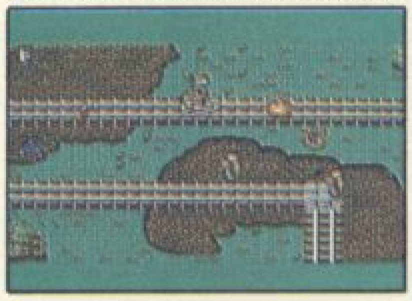
RESCUE MISSION
Sega

Rescue Mission is the third title to use the **Light Phaser Gun**, like the 3-D Glasses the software support for this peripheral has been on the scarce side. While the 3-D Glasses haven't been completely successful as a console extra (see the review of *Blade Eagle* in TGM**007**), the Light Phaser uses a much simpler method of operation and, as such, makes for generally better games.

It's jungle warfare yet again on the Sega but this time you're on the defensive, this still means having to slaughter enemy soldiers by the hundreds. A big offensive by your forces has left allied soldiers wounded and behind enemy lines. Central Command has decreed that you, the sharpest shooter in the army, should provide sniper cover while the medics go in to patch up your wounded comrades.

Three medics go in, one at a time, on one of the most advanced of modern military vehicles . . . a rickety handcart. They crank the handcart along, stopping at each wounded soldier to patch him up before moving on to the next injured man. The enemy frown on this rescue attempt and, armed with grenades, bazookas, missile launchers, bombs and other weaponry, try and prevent the medic getting through.

Direct hits are usually fatal although near-miss explosions, hits by bullets, tear gas or boomerang hits just slow down the handcart. You, too, can hit a medic with the Light Phaser's bullets if you're not careful, though he only falls unconscious until the stars floating around his head are shot. Mines along the track also have to be destroyed otherwise the handcart gets blown off the tracks and the medic killed, whereupon the next medic continues the journey from the start of the zone.



MIKE STEVE AND JOHN

The medics have their own good and bad points: the first, Mike, is slow but steady, Steve is a fast healer of wounds but lazy and has to rest frequently and John is the best all-rounder, but he's the last man and, if lost, it's game over.

Healed soldiers leave behind a special item providing protection against a different enemy weapon. Collecting the first-aid kit has a double effect, healing the medic if he has been wounded and acting as a smart bomb if he hasn't. If a friendly soldier is shot – they can be recognised by the white flags they wave – any collected items are lost.

If the medic makes it safely through to the end of the track, points are awarded based on the number of enemy soldiers shot and allied soldiers successfully treated. The game continues over five levels, from jungle, swamp, village and bridge through to the final ammunition depot.

Like most Sega games, *Rescue Mission* is immediately playable. The action is continuous and each level is as enjoyable to play in itself as the game is as a whole.

SEGA
Mega Cartridge: £19.95

Like the other Light Phaser game Shooting Gallery**, quick eye and triggerfinger coordination is essential. The hit radius around each soldier is pretty large so you don't have to be very accurate in aim, as a result the game is a little too easy (it didn't take more than a couple of hours play to complete when it arrived in THE GAMES MACHINE office.) Unlike the average** Blade Eagle**, the game actually uses the hardware it's intended for and hasn't just been quickly cobbled together.**

OVERALL 74%

" . . . each level is as enjoyable to play in itself as the game is as a whole.

VERSION UPDATE

ALIEN SYNDROME
Ace

Commodore 64/128: Cassette £9.99, Diskette £11.99
Atari ST: £19.99

SEGA's console version of the alien-bashing *Gauntlet*-variant coin-op was reviewed in TGM**004**, although Ace, The Edge's sister label, have the licence to produce the home computer conversions. Ace are also translating other coin-ops including the Taito hits *Soldier Of Light* and *Darius* (conversions of the latter title should be interesting considering the coin-op uses three screens placed together side by side to display the action.)

Aliens have captured your comrades and are now holding them captive in seven spaceships. They need rescuing of course and two future fighters, Ricky and Mary are sent in recover them before a time bomb on each ship explodes. The game follows the *Gauntlet* style with the player (or players) shown from a bird's-eye-view running around the spaceships, collecting extra weapons and releasing the hostages from their captivity.

Additional weapons can be found and a map accessed to display the location of the hostages and the ship layout. Once all the hostages are rescued, the fighters can go to the exit where a mother alien bars progress to the next level unless killed. Each level has its own different style of alien and mother alien, all of which are represented in disgustingly gory and slimy graphics as befits the coin-op.

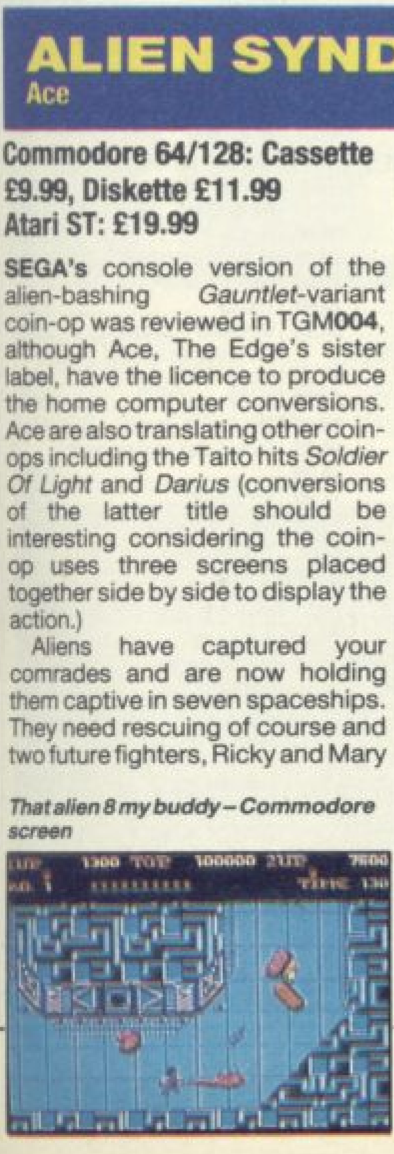
While the Sega console game was unfaithful to the original coin-op by resorting to flipscreen and alternating player action, the Commodore 64 game uses the coin-op's push-scrolling and two-player simultaneous action. The push-scroll isn't particularly friendly as the player needs to move perilously close to the edge of the screen before it works – as a result, any aliens that do appear are very difficult to avoid.

Graphically and sonically, the game is excellent, the music is quality at work and the graphics have much of the gore and slime that made the coin-op such a disgustingly great game to play. The multiload is always a pain, but each level is varied both in graphics and layout and the pace is so fast you're never bored.

This one beats *Gauntlet* and other games of its ilk hands down. Well done Ace!

On the ST the scrolling is very smooth when moving vertically but only reasonable in the horizontal plane. Fortunately, this is not too noticeable during play and in both one- and two-player mode the action moves along smoothly and with pace. Movement along chasm-spanning bridges requires precise positioning, it's all too easy to fall off in the heat of battle – a minor, yet frustrating problem. An extra for this version only, is the protective droid which, when collected, acts as a rearguard. *Alien Syndrome* is high in graphic detail and makes excellent use of colour and animation. **Tahir Rashid** (responsible for the graphics) has gone a long way toward capturing the atmosphere and stomach-churning gore of the coin-op.

That alien 8 my buddy – Commodore screen



The slightly jerky horizontal scrolling is not noticed when you're up to your neck in aliens – Atari ST screen



COMMODORE 64/128: OVERALL 89%

ATARI ST: OVERALL 92%

Castle Computers

NOW TAKEN [Access / Visa]

Dept VG, Castle House
11 Newcastle Street
Burslem
Stoke-on-Trent
ST6 3QB
Tel: 0782 575043

SPECTRUM SPECIAL OFFERS

Target Renagade	5.50
Ikari Warriors	5.50
We are the Champions	7.25
10 Great Games Vol. 2	7.25
Rolling Thunder	6.50
Cybernoid	5.50
Black Lamp	5.50
Rastan	5.50
Renagade	5.25
720°	6.50
Nigel M. Grand Prix	7.50
Magnificent 7	7.25
Predator	6.99
Platoon	6.99
Dan Dare II	5.50
World War 1	4.95
Outrun	6.50
Crazy Cars	6.50
Gunship	6.99
Sorceror Lord	9.50
Napoleon at War	6.50
4 Smash Hits	6.99
Flintstones	6.50
A Tactical Fighter	6.99
Desolator	6.50
World Class Leader Board	6.50
Impossible Mission II	6.50
Action Force II	6.50
Beyond the Ice Palace	5.50
Arcade Force Four	7.25

★ ★ ★TO CLEAR★ ★ ★

Heartland	1.99
Cholo	3.99
Druid II: Enlightenment	2.99
GFL Baseball	2.99
Mystery of the Nile	2.99
Red L.E.D.	2.99
Sidewize	2.99
Road Runner	2.99
Wolf Man	2.99
Bride of Frankenstein	2.99
Thro The Trap Door	2.99
Mad Max	2.99
Ninja Hampster	3.95
The Living Daylights	3.95
Kids Play	4.95
Little Comp People (128 only)	4.95
Dark Empire	2.99
The Hulk	99p
Trantor	2.99
Hot Rasputin	1.99
Ramparts	2.99
Road Runner	3.95
Psycho Soldier	3.95
Shadow Skimmer	2.99
Barbarian	3.95
Xecutor	2.99
Indiana Jones	2.99
Basket Master	2.99
Phantom Club	2.99
Clever & Smart	1.99
Star Fox	2.99
Sidewize	2.99
Survivor	2.99
Kung Fu Master	2.25
Fairlight	2.99
I of the Mask	1.99
Firefly	2.99
Star Raiders II	2.99
Wiz	2.99
Quartet	2.99
Super Sprint	2.99
Galactic Games	2.99
Gunslinger	2.99
Last Mission	1.99

ATARI ST OFFERS

Dungeon Master	15.95
Ikari Warriors	10.95
Vampires Empire	13.95
Rolling Thunder	12.95
Legend of Sword	15.95
Pandora	12.95
Space Harrier	12.95
Battleships	10.95
Buggy Boy	12.95
Outrun	12.95
Carrier Command	15.95
Oids	13.95
Platoon	13.95
Slapfight	11.95
Pink Panther	13.95
Sinbad & T of Falcon	21.95
Rocket Ranger	21.95
The Three Stooges	21.95
Where Time Stood Still	13.95
Storm Trooper	13.95
Verminator	16.95
Gunship	15.95
Quantum Paintbox	12.95
Obliterator	15.95
Uni. Military Simulator	15.95
Terramex	12.95
Blacklamp	12.95
Bubble Bobble	12.95
Vixen	12.95

ATARI ST OFFERS

Crazy Cars	11.95
Chessmaster 2000	16.95
Checkmate	7.50
Crash Garrett	13.95
Classiques	11.95
* Ballyhoo	9.50
Defender of the Crown	21.95
* Extensor	5.95
* Enchanter	9.50
* Hacker II	8.95
* Infidel	9.50
* Hollywood Hijinx	9.50
* Winter Olympiad '88	13.95
Tanglewood	13.95
Silent Service	16.95
* Annuls of Rome	9.95
Bards Tales	16.95
* Brimstone	9.95
* Skullduggery	9.95
* Clever & Smart	8.95
* Western Games	8.95
* Little Comp People	10.95
* Trinity	9.50
* Tee Up Golf	8.95
* War Zone	4.95
Turbo ST	7.50
Shadow Gate	15.95
Sentinal	9.95
Star Glider	13.95

ATARI ST OFFERS

* Side Winder	6.99
Scruples	13.95
Star Trek	13.95
* Sky Fox	7.95
* Strip Poker	7.95
* Solomon's Key	10.95
* Suspect	9.50
* Sea Stalker	9.50
* Spellbreaker	9.50
Impossible Mission II	13.95
* Spy v Spy	8.95
* Karate kid II	12.95
Star Wars	13.95
Super Sprint	10.95
Marble Madness	16.95
* Tau Ceti	8.95
* Accademy	8.95
Music Con Set	16.95
* Moonmist	9.50
Degas Elite	16.95
Vixen	12.95
Balance of Power	21.95
War Hawk	6.95
Captain Blood	15.95
Rampage	10.50
Leather Necks	13.95
Tetris	13.95
F15 Strike Eagle	15.95
TNT	12.95

ATARI ST OFFERS

Micro League Wrestling	13.95
Joe Blade	6.99
Hunt for Red October	15.95
Chopper X	6.95
Not a Penny More	13.95
Perry Mason	13.95
Karate Master	8.95
Trivial Pursuit	13.95
Screaming Wings (with speech)	10.95
Gauntlet 2	12.95
Road War 2000	15.95
Road War Europa	15.95
Mercenary Compendium	15.95
Test Drive	16.95
Ranarama	12.95
* Wanderer	8.95
Kings Quest Triple Pack	17.95
Terrorpods	16.95
Barbarian (PVS)	16.95
Barbarian (Palace)	10.95
Strike Force Harrier	16.95
Pink Panther	12.95
* Boulderdash Con Kit	9.50
* Ultima II	11.95
S.D.I.	19.95
Road Runner	15.95
Hard Ball	12.95
Road Wars	13.95
Xenon	13.95

C64 SPECIAL OFFERS

Target Renagade	6.75
Ikari Warriors	6.99
Pac Land	6.99
Rolling Thunder	6.99
Platoon	6.75
Hercules	6.99
Ten Great Games Vol. 2	7.25
Test Drive	7.50
Skate or Die	7.50
Chuck Yaegars Flight Sim	7.50
The Train	7.50
Vixen	6.75
Stealth Fighter	10.95
Airbourne Ranger	10.95
Adv. Tactical Fighter	6.99
Power at Sea	7.50
Rim Runner	6.99
Magnetron	6.99
Preditor	6.99
Super Hang On	6.99
Apollo 18	7.50
10 (Firebird)	7.25
Gutz	6.75
Side Arms	6.99
Karnov	6.99
Arkanoid 2	6.50
4th and Inches	6.99
Samurai Warriors	6.99
Action Force II	6.99
Gothic	6.99
Impossible Mission II	6.99
4th and Inches	6.99

Why go elsewhere?

We stock most games on all formats.
Telephone for games not listed. All games are sent 1st class, most by return of post.
Castle Computers, the competent mail-order firm that cares about its customers!

AMIGA SPECIAL OFFERS

Sidewinder	6.99
Portal	9.50
Xenon	13.95
Road Wars	13.95
Strip Poker II	10.95
Rolling Thunder	16.95
Mach 3	13.95
Sinbad & T. of Falcon	21.95
Rocket Ranger	21.95
Three Stooges	21.95
Storm Trooper	13.95
Verminator	16.95
BLACK SHADOW	*only 9.95*
Test Drive	16.95
Garrison	15.00
* Sorceror	9.50
* Star Fleet 1	15.95
* Starcross	9.50
* War Zone	6.99
* Spellbreaker	9.50
* Planetfall	9.50
* Space Station	6.99
Marble Madness	16.95
Barbarian	16.95
Ferrari Formula 1	16.95
* Stationfall	9.50
Sentinal	13.95

AMIGA SPECIAL OFFERS

* 3 Stooges	21.50
* Wishbringer	9.50
Pac Land	13.95
Pac Boy	6.99
Leviathan	13.95
Interceptor	17.95
Battleships	10.95
Protector	6.99
Backlash	13.95
Time Bandit	13.95
Road Wars	13.95
Police Quest	13.95
Carrier Command	16.95
3D Helicopter	17.95
Gunship	24.95
Flight Sim II	34.95
Grand Slam Tennis	21.95
Grid Start	6.99
Shooting Star	6.99
Space Ranger	6.99
Star Glider	16.95
World Games	16.95
Q-ball	13.95
Insanity Fight	12.95
Lurking Horror	16.95
Fighter Command	22.95
Uni. Mil. Sim.	16.95
Garrison 2	15.95
Vixen	12.95

AMIGA SPECIAL OFFERS

Ninja Mission	6.99
Shadowgate	22.50
Plundered Hearts	16.95
Aargh!	13.95
Adventure Con Kit	22.50
Arena	15.95
Bards Tale	16.95
Blastball	13.95
Western Games	7.99
Destroyer	16.95
E. Weevers Baseball	16.95
Final Trip	6.99
Gee Bee Air Rally	13.95
H.R. 35 Fighter Mission	P.O.A.
Indoor Sports	13.95
Las Vegas	6.99
Mean 18 Golf	12.95
Hardball	12.95
Roadwar Europa	16.95
Pinball Wizard	13.95
Vader	6.99
Star Wars	13.95
Super Huey II	12.95
Terramex	13.95
Terropods	16.95
Trivia Trove	6.99
* Zork I or III	9.50
Mouse Trap	10.95
Leaderboard	16.95

ST UTILITIES

First Word +	59.95
Desk Top Publisher	69.95
GST Macro Assembler	14.95
GST C Compiler	14.95
Data Manager	56.95
Mark Williams C Compiler	89.95
Art Director	34.95
Film Director	39.95
Swift Calc	56.95
Partner ST	34.95
CAD 3D I O	17.95
3D Developers Disc	23.95
Fleet Street Publisher	84.95

While stocks last!
WORD WRITER & DESK TOP PUBLISHER
RRP £179.95
Our price £119.95

While stocks last!
DATA MANAGER & SWIFT CALC
RRP £159.90
Our price £69.95

★ CLEARANCE OFFERS ★

Enigma Force	99p
Lords of Midnights	1.99
Eagles	1.70
Red L.E.D.	2.99
Hysteria	2.99
Mask II	3.95
Masters Uni the Movie	3.95
President	1.99
Solomans Key	2.99
Star Raiders II	2.99
M.A.C.H.	2.99
Tigers in the Snow	2.99
Werner	2.99
Mean City	2.99
Rygar	2.99p
Mega Apocalypse	2.99
Dark Empire	2.99
Trantor	2.99
Gamestar Baseball	2.99
Gamestar Basketball	2.99
Clever and Smart	2.99
Druid	1.99
The Comet Game	99p
Druid II the Enlightenment	2.99
Renegade	3.95
Election	2.99
B24 Bomber	4.95
Octapolis	2.99
Knight Games II	2.99
Psycho Soldier	3.95
Firefly	4.95
Basket Master	3.95
Ramparts	2.99
Gryzor	3.95
Supersprint	2.99
Galactic Games	2.99
Last Mission	2.99
Lazer Tag	4.95
Jack the Nipper II	2.99
Yogi Bear	1.99
Frankenstein	3.95
Thing Bounces Back	2.99

WE TAKE EVERY NEW ST RELEASE SO PHONE NOW FOR NEW TITLES!

*** LIMITED QUANTITY. P & P is free on all orders over £5. Under £5 please add 50p. Please state *The Games Machine* when ordering.**

SPITTING DREAMBUBBLES

THE GREAT GIANA SISTERS

GO!

Originally a very popular **Rainbow Arts** release in West Germany, this **Time Warp** production has now been picked up for UK distribution by GO!. Programming is by **Thomas Hertzler** on the Amiga and **Armin Gessert Treoz** on the Commodore 64/128 with graphics by **Manfred Trenz**.

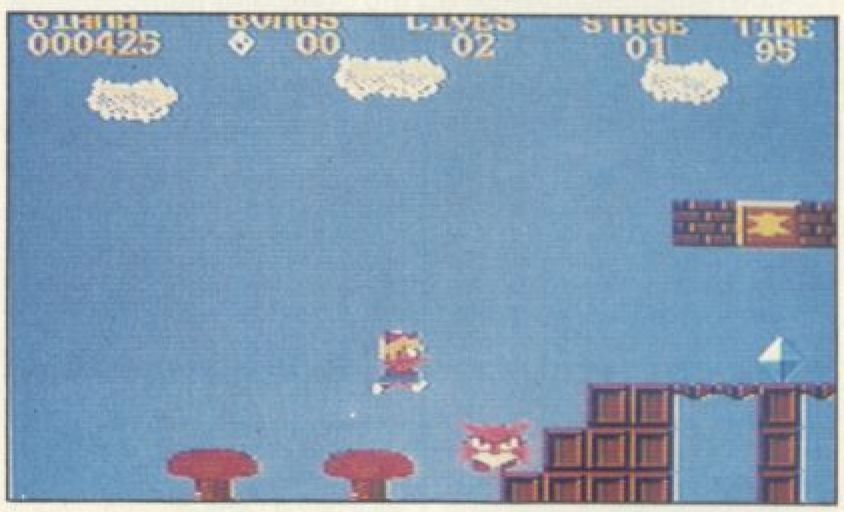
Giana was just a normal little fräulein dozing in her bed in Milano (an EEC game, see . . .) when her dreams took an unexpected turn. Transported into a strangely wonderful dreamworld of horizontally scrolling platforms, she found herself struggling to survive the attacks of grumpy owls, disembodied eyes and vicious wasps.

Fortunately Giana can crush most of these monsters by jumping on them, and if she headbutts a special star-brick, a firewheel is released which transforms her into a fearsome punkette. In this guise Giana destroys normal brick sections and uncovers special ones which yield bonus diamonds. More diamonds can be collected by jumping at those floating in the sky and headbutting star-bricks; if a hundred diamond bonuses are collected, an extra life is awarded.

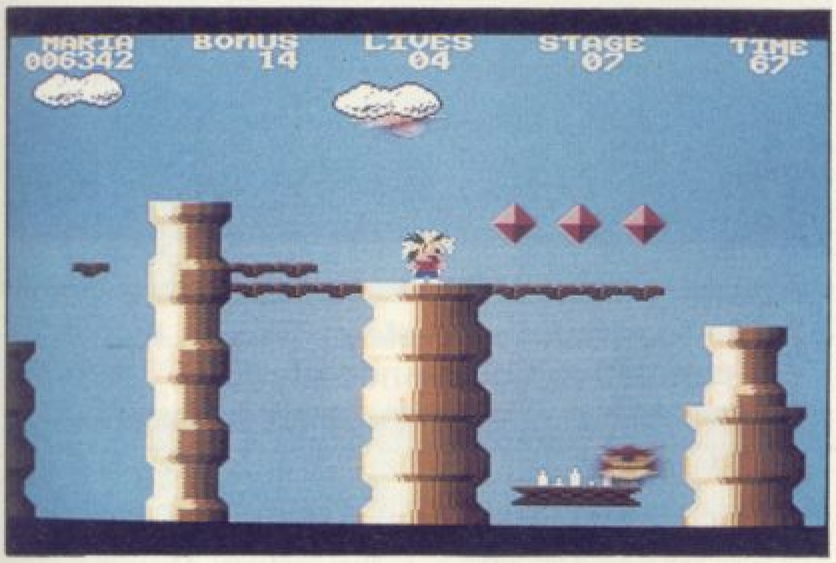
Other objects, collected from star-panels, give Giana dreambubbles to, uhm, spit at the enemy, bouncing dreambubbles and homing dreambubbles. In addition there are special feature-objects such as clocks (put the creatures to sleep), smart bombs and water drops (protection against fire) which are activated by pressing the space bar.

Each of the game's 32 levels has a time limit of 100 seconds and should Giana fight her way through the monsters, successfully leaping all the hazardous pits and deadly pools of water, a points bonus is awarded for the amount of time remaining. If time runs out, a life is lost – along with all Giana's dreamweapons. Not all the pits are fatal, however, some lead down to caves packed with diamonds and only experience shows where these caves are. Another hidden feature is the presence of invisible blocks which if headbutted warp Giana several levels forward.

On both the Amiga and C64 disk version there is an all-time high score table and 'Today's Greatest' version which is a thoughtful addition to this *Super Mario Brothers*-type game. If two players wish to compete they can take turns controlling Giana and her sister Maria.



Collecting the diamonds is but a pipe-dream away – Amiga screen



Searching underground takes more than tunnel vision – Amiga screen



COMMODORE 64/128
Cassette: £9.99
Diskette: £11.99

The Commodore game features some very nicely stylised graphics and good in-game tunes. Making much better use of the machine, this version provides a lot better value-for-money and even does without the disk access required by the Amiga.

OVERALL 82%

OTHER FORMATS

Conversions are planned for the Spectrum (£8.99 cassette, £12.99 diskette), Amstrad (£9.99 cassette, £14.99 diskette) and ST (£19.99 diskette). No versions are the game will be made available until an all-format release toward the end of July.

AMIGA Diskette: £24.99

The Amiga version has sharper graphics and clearer tunes than the C64, but is little improved otherwise, making the game distinctly unimpressive visually. Addictive gameplay, however, turns this into one of the better German releases available in the UK.

OVERALL 78%

"Addictive gameplay, however, turns this into one of the better German releases available in the UK."

YOU'RE IT!

LAZER TAG

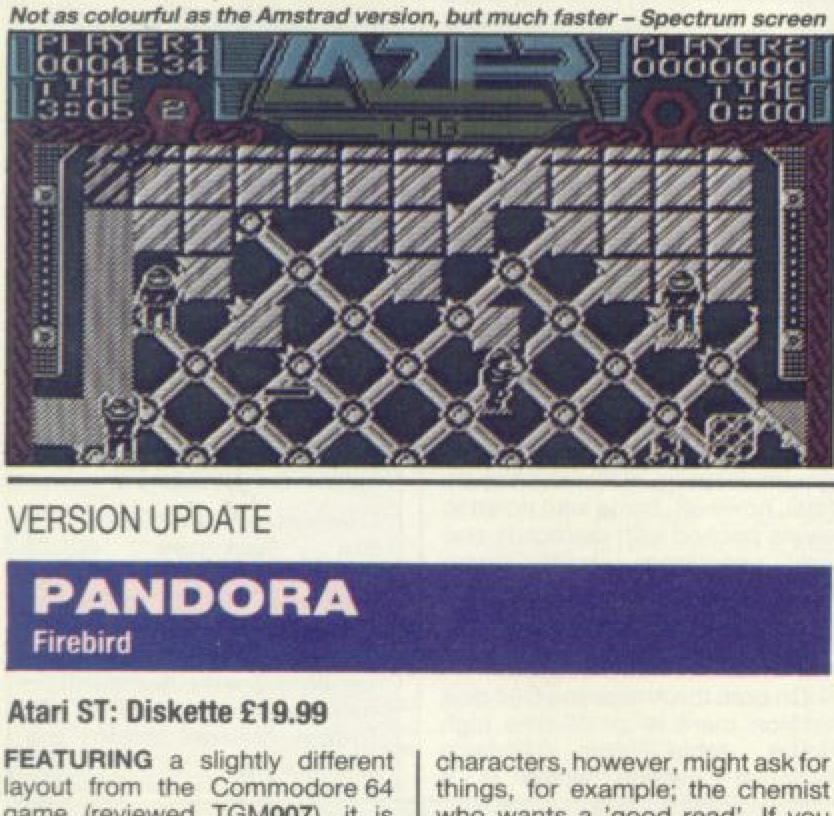
GO!

Once upon a time in America George A Carter III founded a company – Photon Entertainment – which used hi-tech to simulate *Star Wars*-type battles in franchised arenas for kids with lots of pocket money. Of the various systems which proliferated, **Lazer Tag** has proved one of the most successful (see feature in TGM**001**) and GO! picked up the computer game licence on the bizarre condition that there be no violence. The programming is by **Probe Software** (*Outrun* conversions.)

Apparently there is a Lazer Tag training school where cadets can learn how to be expert in the game and earn promotion. Training sessions are divided into two sections; tag and target. In the tag section you guide your character through the arena to the gate at its end. Other cadets may be shot for extra points, if they touch your character a life is lost.

Along the way equipment can be picked up for time and lives bonuses. Various vehicles drive across screen and have to be avoided, but towers can be shot at which reflect your lazer in numerous direction. Failure to reach the gate before the time limits runs out loses a life. If the gate is reached, a target section begins which has the character automatically running through the arena again, invincible, with the player able to shoot other cadets for points. In two-player mode players take turns rather than both being on screen at the same time. Ultimately, however, *Lazer Tag* looks and plays like an inferior and repetitive *Commando* clone, with some irritating quirks on machines such as the C64.

Not as colourful as the Amstrad version, but much faster – Spectrum screen





The good guy tags his way up the screen so that he may tag his way up another – Amstrad screen

COMMODORE 64/128 Cassette: £9.99, Diskette: £11.99

The Commodore version has big graphics but rather bland colours and tune. More importantly cadets when shot can still kill you as they slowly walk off screen, which is irritating, as is the stunned stupor the character goes into after being shot making control difficult for a few seconds. Unlike the other two versions, enemy cadets don't actually fire at you but must touch the character to kill.

OVERALL 32%

AMSTRAD CPC Cassette: £9.99, Diskette: £14.99

The Amstrad version has smaller but also more colourful graphics and a good continuous tune. Another plus point is that when cadets are shot they are instantly taken off screen much as in a conventional shoot-'em-up. Nevertheless lack of variety in gameplay and somewhat sluggish responses make this a below average *Commando* variant.

OVERALL 54%

SPECTRUM 48/128 Cassette: £8.99

The Spectrum version is virtually identical in appearance to the Amstrad one – albeit in monochrome. Lack of colour and continuous tune are disadvantages on the Spectrum, but faster gameplay helps compensate.

OVERALL 53%

OTHER VERSIONS

GO! are not planning conversions to any of the 16-bit machines.

"Lazer Tag **looks and plays like an inferior, repetitive** Commando **clone . . .** "

VERSION UPDATE

PANDORA

Firebird

Atari ST: Diskette £19.99

FEATURING a slightly different layout from the Commodore 64 game (reviewed TGM**007**), it is essentially the same story of interstellar drama. A salvage expert has been beamed aboard the derelict Pandora only to find many of its crew either mad or dead. Besides searching for alien objects to transport back to his ship, the intrepid merchant must survive Pandora's efficient security system and a punk hooligan.

The main part of this overhead-view arcade-adventure is collecting various objects and interaction with the remaining crew members. Characters such as the punk seem interested only in violence – the more reasonable characters, however, might ask for things, for example; the chemist who wants a 'good read'. If you find the necessary item, return with it to the chemist, and by holding it – rather than having it in your pockets or backpack – you can trade with him for another, hopefully more useful object. Completing the mission earns a score dependent on the number of alien artifacts recovered.

The most obvious improvement in the ST version is the graphics, which are both very attractive and exceptionally detailed. Unfortunately animation isn't quite so impressive and sound is virtually non-existent. The scrolling consists of sudden moves in the direction you're travelling rather than smoothly following your character, as on the C64. None of these factors impair gameplay and indeed the relative slowness makes it a little easier, and less irritating to play, since characters are not so blindingly fast. More substantive improvements come in the form of a larger number of alien artifacts to be collected and a time limit which no longer kills you on zero – instead your score is reduced. This user-friendliness is marred in part by the security shields which do kill you instantly. While not making best use of the ST – other than in graphics – this is a reasonable conversion and a compulsive, atmospheric puzzle that won't take forever to solve.

ATARI ST: OVERALL 79%

If you run into the Ship's Priest you haven't got a prayer



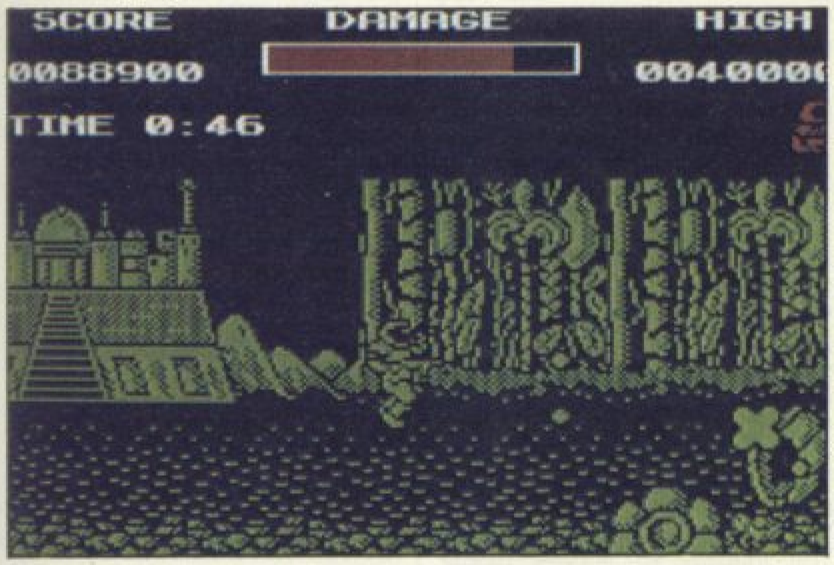
EXOSKELETAL FUN

SOLDIER OF LIGHT
Ace

This is Ace's third game, and the second coin-op conversion from venerable **Softek**'s relatively new label. Coding is by a programmer almost as venerable as Softek, **Christian Urquhart**, one of the most experienced Spectrum programmers whose *Hunchback* was among Ocean's first commercial successes back in 1984.)

Xain'd Sleena is a Federation stormtrooper who has been given orders direct from the Galactic High Command. Several planets have been invaded by the hideous Empire and Xain's task is to clear the worlds of all enemy troops. He arrives on the first planet wearing a damage-absorbing exoskeleton suit and jet boots. His weapon is a standard single-skim laser, but more powerful armament has been dropped on the planet, minus labels. Included in these weapon pods are armour-piercing lances, double-shot fireballs and triple-fire blasters. The latter is particularly satisfying to use (and

Monochromatic it may be, but the animation, gameplay and content make for an extremely playable coin-op conversion – Spectrum screens





Struggling towards the end of level one, not far to go now before the confrontation with the massive end-of-level android

all but essential for the lethal moon-buggies), but a time limit means the stormtrooper always has to hurry – when time runs out a life is lost.

After a planet is completed by defeating the end-of-level robot, you fly Xain to the next planet in his laser-equipped spaceship. Several waves of various suicidal enemy ships try and stop you, however. Should you survive this onslaught then you can begin the fight for the next world.

Planet two has a markedly different, prehistoric landscape with large poisonous plants, deadly flies and a huge sea monster. After this a multiload allows access to planet three which has a huge, ruined temple inhabited by monks and a fearsome Tutenkhamen head. If you die here levels 1 and 2 are thoughtfully rerecorded after level 3, so merely pressing play loads them in – as good a use of multiload as can be imagined, although the 128 works no differently. In addition when you have conquered the third planet there is a continue play option, retaining your high score but progressively weakening your armour.

SPECTRUM 48/128
Cassette: £7.99
+3 Diskette: £14.99

The largely monochrome graphics of Soldier Of Light **are consistently impressive and fast, making the game visually top class. Sound FX are generally adequate while gameplay is both very challenging and addictive. In conclusion this is a great, if unoriginal, arcade conversion which makes excellent use of the Spectrum. The +3 disk version won't be ready for a while.**

OVERALL 86%

OTHER FORMATS

Conversions are planned for both the Amstrad and C64, priced identically: £8.99 cassette, £14.99 disk.

" . . . challenging and addictive, if unoriginal, arcade conversion makes excellent use of the Spectrum."

VERSION UPDATE

DRILLER
Incentive

PC: £19.95

THE 3-D arcade-adventure which swept the CRASH readers' awards for best game, best packaging and most imaginative game – *Driller* (reviewed TGM**002**) – has been converted to the PC.

The uninhabited moon of Mitral is due to be hit by a comet in four hours time. Illegal mining by outlaw Ketars has left large quantities of gas trapped on the moon and unless this is released before the meteor hits Mitral, the planet it orbits will be devastated. The objective is to explore Mitral's 18 mining sectors and release at least 50% of the trapped gas by placing drilling rigs over gas pockets. Some pockets are marked by a large X, others are hidden under buildings. Finding these structures, and opening up sectors so they can be explored, demands the solving of numerous 3-D puzzles carefully worked into the atmospheric landscape.

Further problems, of a more arcade nature, are provided by Mitral's still active defence systems.

The PC version of this acclaimed game is a reproach to dozens of 8-bit conversions which appear indistinguishable from their original incarnations. Incentive's revolutionary Freescape solid 3-D runs so quickly on this machine that by adding a few more defence towers the game could almost be a pure arcade shoot-'em-up.

Game options include EGA/CGA plus a choice of keyboard or joystick (IBM and Amstrad versions). This is one of the best PC games we've seen and, with its very useful load/save function, it should provide a substantial long-term quest of the first order.

ATARI ST: OVERALL 95%

The speed of the game is amazing, although all this means is that you get stumped quicker



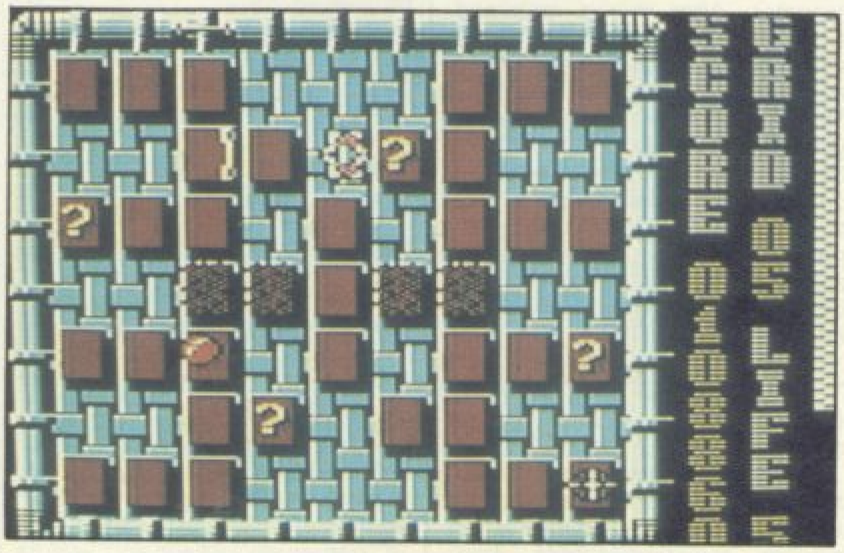
QUADROIDPHENIA

OOPS!
Big Apple

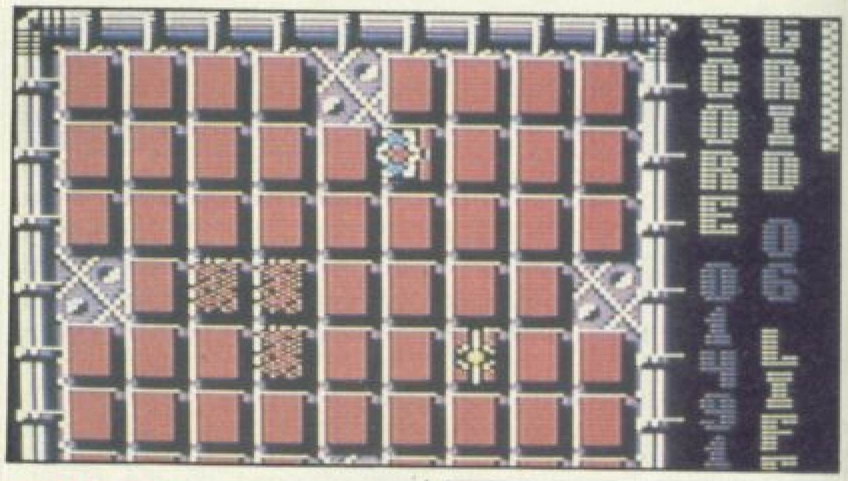
This is the first release by new software house, Big Apple, which has been launched by the multi-media entertainment organisation **Prestwich Holdings plc** (we thought you might like to know that.) The programmer behind *Oops!* is Big Apple's software development manager, **Jason Kendall**, who has previously written *Squij, Wizard's Pet* and *Starslayer* – the latter being due for release by Firebird in August.

The Quadroid is a special machine that spends its existence trundling around the space-time continuum which, as every good student of Relativity knows, is mysteriously suspended over a continuously-scrolling Atomic Gravitational Field. The aim of the Quadroid's brief lives is to collect gravity pods (Garyds) from the continuum grid – made up of various patterns of square blocks – while avoiding falling on to the lethal Gravity Field itself.

Unfortunately some parts of the grid exist only for relativistic nano-seconds, and should Quadroid be on these when they disappear a life is lost. Other squares crack on first contact and break if you attempt to go over them again. A more serious hazard is presented by Rimlords who patrol the top and left-hand sides of the screen – dawdle on the grid lines and they deal out a punishment. An orange Electron Bomb bounces around the screen with the sole intention of reducing the Quadroid to dissonant quarks and protons.



Don't get annoyed, Quadroid



GRID AND BEAR IT

To help the Quadroid, there are special squares, marked with a question mark, which give bonus points or an extra life. Also concealed under these squares are arrows which push the Quadroid in the direction they point – toward possibly dangerous situations. Retaliation is aided by mines which are planted by pressing fire – they detonate shortly afterward taking passing Rimlords with them.

Once all Garyds are collected from a screen, the enemies die and your score is totalled up – with a bonus for the amount of time remaining. When two levels have been completed a special no-enemies bonus screen may be attempted. There are 32 screens in all, which remain the same from game to game allowing strategies to be developed and repeated. The inability to access higher levels – as in *Boulderdash* – is a drawback which may prove frustrating after losing your last life on level 31, but generally *Oops!* is an original and enjoyable challenge if a little on the tough side.

COMMODORE 64
Cassette £9.95
Diskette: £14.95

Given that this is essentially a puzzle game, the presentation is above-average with a slickly scrolling background, which changes direction every time the Quadroid does, some useful spot effects and a functional tune.

OVERALL 75%

OTHER FORMATS

Conversions are planned for the Spectrum (Cassette: £7.95), Atari ST, Amiga and PC (all £19.95). Big Apple are also considering developing a special cheat mode/extra-screens game add-on.

" . . . Oops! is an original and enjoyable challenge."

VERSION UPDATE

THUNDERCATS
Elite

Atari ST: £19.99

WE SAID it was 'imminent' back in TGM**002** (Amstrad 87%, CBM 64 86%, Spectrum 90%), but the ST version has been a few months arriving. Still, the graphic detail of villainy and superb horizon effect indicate the time has been well spent.

Game structure and objectives remain essentially the same as on 8-bit machines. Evil Mumm-ra has stolen the fabulous Eye Of Thundera, kidnapped members of the Thundercat team and retreated to Castle Plundar. It's Lion-O to the rescue! The Thundercats leader's quest is a horizontally-scrolling combat game with Lion-O jumping yawning pits, scything henchmen and kneeling to dispose of smaller, but equally vicious enemies. Hitting containers gains point bonuses, extra weapons and lives. In 14 levels, three are rescue missions with one chance to free an imprisoned Thundercat.

This version offers much-improved graphics and slick animation, which slightly slows the pace, but this is compensated for by shorter sword strokes demanding a greater precision in fighting. A tough, well-designed challenge, this is a compelling conversion that is a must for all ST owners, whether they be fans of the BBC series or not.

ATARI ST: OVERALL 85%



Lion-O swallows his pride and runs without paws for the level-end

YOU'LL LIKE THIS . . . ?

EVERY SECOND COUNTS
Domark

Here is the next in what promises to be a long line of Domark TV Games. Domark purchased many titles last year from Macsen when that company collapsed. *Every Second Counts* is only the second TV Game which Domark have sourced themselves – the first, not produced by Macsen, was the disappointing *Krypton Factor*. Both these original games have been programmed by **Consult Computing**.

The structure of the game follows that of the popular BBC TV programme fairly closely, but for the absence of Paul Daniels. You are asked to select which of six question blocks to load in, then how many couples are playing, finally six characters appear on-screen whom players can choose to represent themselves. If someone hasn't got a partner the player must take a fictional one and key in their answers. Should only one couple be playing, there's no computer opponent and they get all the questions to themselves – a big advantage since each point adds a second to the time available for the crucial final round.

The first round shows the selected players sitting at their desks; if couples are playing the person whose picture appears at the top of the screen should answer the question. Answering is done by pressing a true or false key and there isn't a time limit. If a player answers correctly the team gets two points, if the answer is wrong then the team is eliminated from the round. There are only nine questions in a round so the sooner other teams go out the better. Round 2 is exactly the same, except it is now the second member of the couple who gets to answer.

Following that is a bonus level which begins with the lowest-scoring team getting to select one of three categories of questions. The team is then given the appropriate question which they have ten chances to answer correctly. If the first answer is correct ten points are awarded, nine on the next attempt, then eight and so on. The next lowest-scoring team gets to select one of the two remaining categories leaving the least popular one to the highest-scoring team.

ALBANIA

Rounds 3 and 4 are identical to the first and second but with twice the points for a correct answer. Round 5 is another bonus round. After it the team with the highest score then goes into the final round. Since there are only two players involved, a second set of keys are provided, on the left-side of the keyboard, for player two. Control of selecting the right answer is then alternated between the two sets of keys – which can be rather confusing for one player with the accumulated score now counting down as a time limit.

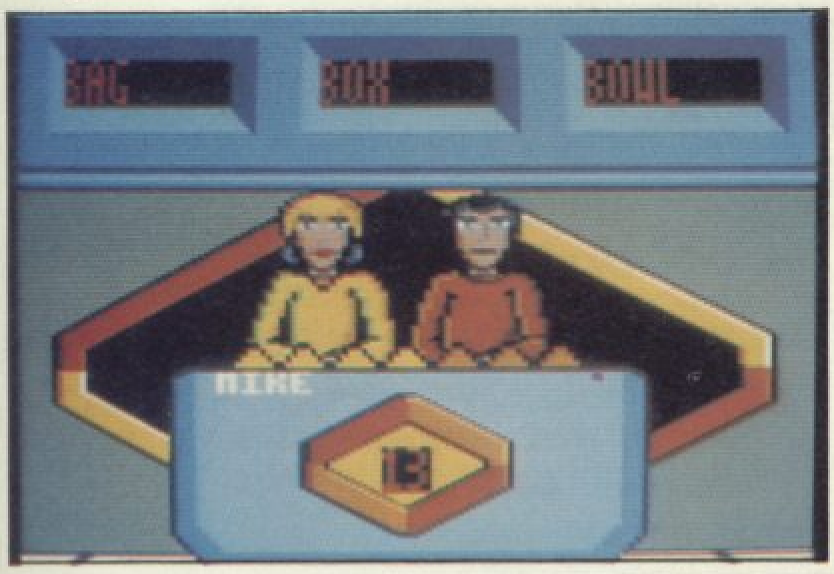
On the couple's shared desk there are seven lights. After selecting which of two categories to play four lights go up and to finish the round all lights must be extinguished by selecting the right answer out of three possible choices. The next section then adds another light and offers another choice of categories. This process goes on until either all seven lights have been lit and extinguished or time runs out. Should you be successful, there's a special *Every Second Counts* trophy screen, which probably isn't too much worse than a typical BBC holiday in Albania.

While generally well-executed, with effective use of the multiload on tape versions, *Every Second Counts* is limited by the shortness of each game so that if three couples of similar abilities are playing it's unlikely the winning couple will be able to amass enough time to be successful on the final round. If you have only one couple in the game then it's substantially easier, but playing alone can soon become boring as the reward of a trophy screen is meagre and diminishes substantially after being seen once. The amount of questions included in one load is impressive, especially on the final round, but bonus round questions in particular are exceptionally limited and soon loop round.



The contestants buying time by saying 'Yes ball' – Commodore screen

The more bulbs you put out, the more prizes you win – there's nothing like a bit of light entertainment – Amstrad screen



AMSTRAD
Cassette £7.95
Diskette: £12.95

The Amstrad game has some nice, well-defined graphics with characters smiling when they get a question right. Tunes are similarly professional and present the game in a consistently attractive fashion.

OVERALL 61%

COMMODORE 64/128
Cassette £7.95
Diskette: £10.95

The Commodore version shows a similarly efficient use of the computer with good tunes and nice graphics.

OVERALL 61%

OTHER FORMATS

A conversion is expected for the Spectrum at £7.95 – there are no plans for a disk version.

"While generally well-executed, Every Second Counts **is limited by the shortness of each game"**

L FOR LEATHER

LEATHERNECK

Microdeal

Leatherneck is the first 16-bit game to incorporate simultaneous four-player action (though *Gauntlet II* is only seconds behind, see review on page 68.) For one or two players, the normal ST joystick ports are used but for three to four, a joystick adaptor (available from Microdeal at £5.95) is required. **Steve Bak** programmed the game, with graphics by **Pete Lyon** (of *Airball* and *Goldrunner* fame).

A *Commando* variant in which maximum destruction of the enemy is the name of the game, there is no subtle plot or complex gameplay in *Leatherneck* – simply kill or be killed!

It's set over four vertically push-scrolling zones set in a jungle environment – a sort of Vietnam complete with oriental enemy soldiers to massacre. As is to be expected with Steve Bak programs, the vertical scrolling is excellent, and it's nice to see that you don't have to move too far up screen to make the push-scroll work. Pete Lyon's graphics work well to recreate the jungly atmosphere: huts, rocks and jungle paths are all effectively done with excellent graphics of crashed helicopters, aircraft and other wreckage throughout each zone.

Each player is armed with three weapons, a short-range, rapid-fire light machine gun, a longer-range, slow-fire heavy machine gun and a supply of grenades. Ammunition is limited, although extra supplies can be picked up throughout each zone, but with four players on screen, you have to fight your friends as to who gets it.

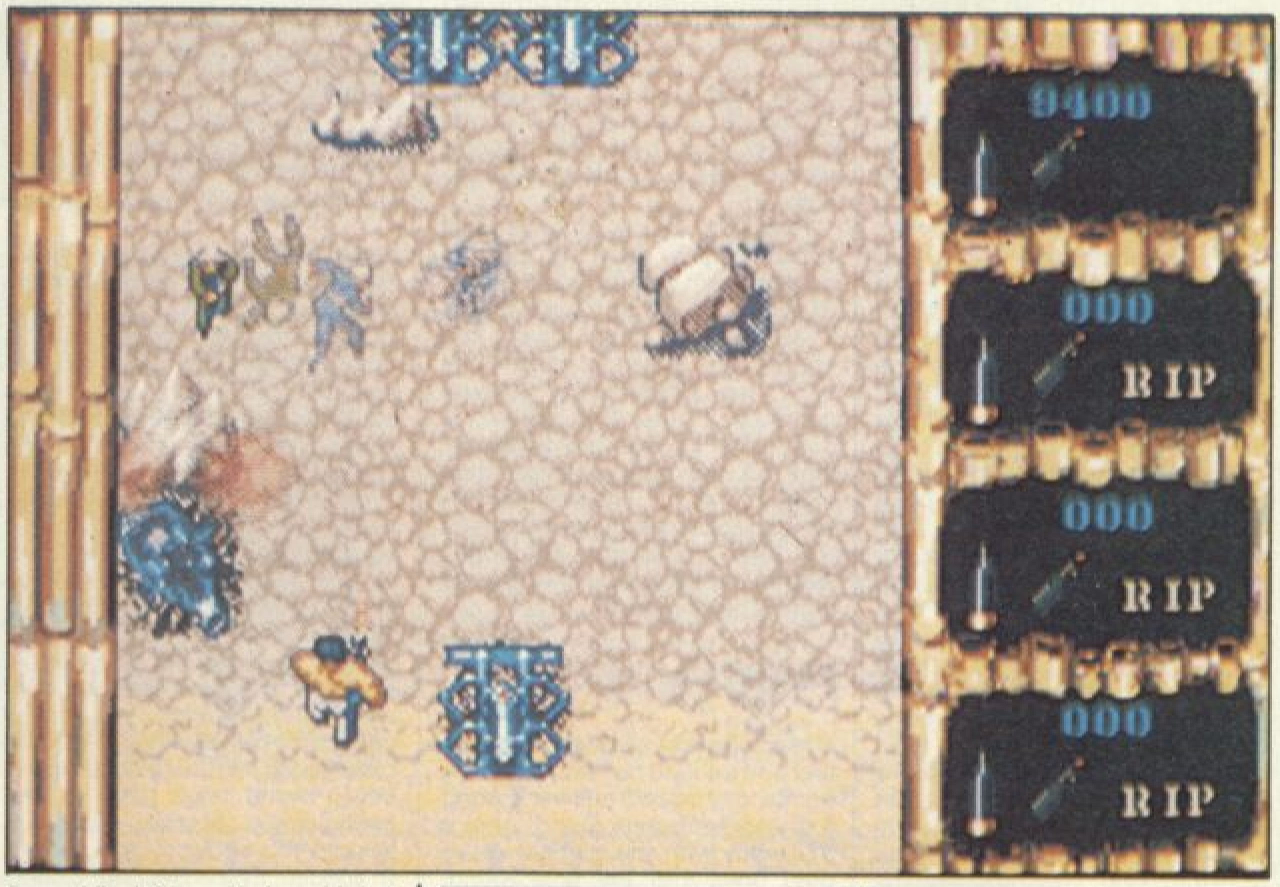
SWATTING THE ENEMY

Throughout each zone, enemy soldiers run on screen, either solo or groups, launching grenades or firing rifles at you before running off. As well as soldiers, machine gun nests fire bullets in a continuous circular stream, and heavy guns guarding narrow jungle paths fire shells at anything that moves. A well-aimed grenade is needed to dispose of these gun emplacements. A life is lost if a player is hit by a bullet, grenade or shell or by physical contact with the enemy. The latter form of death is unfair considering the Leatherneck commandos are pretty tough characters in comparison with the tiny Viet-Cong soldiers.

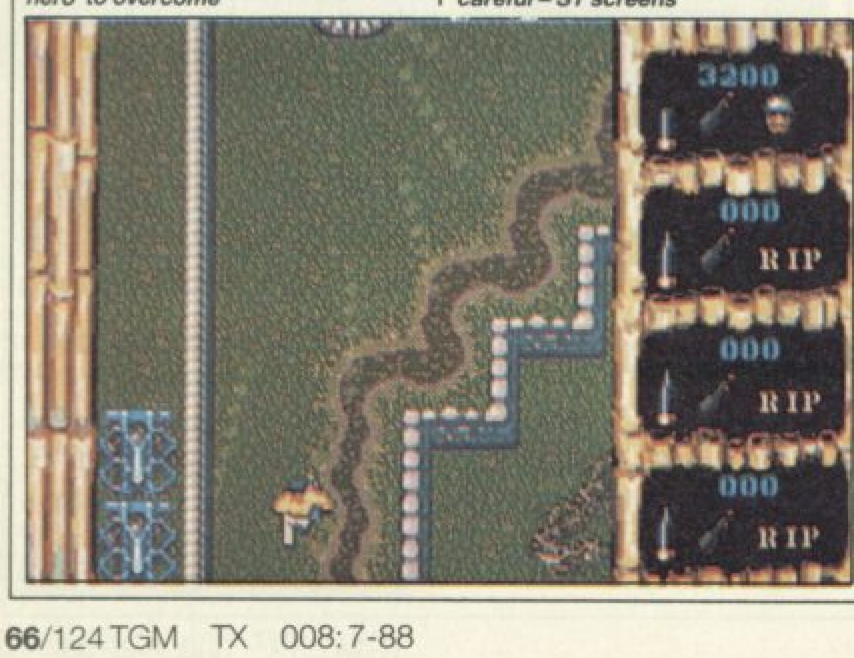
At any time, current weapons can be changed either by pressing a key or rapidly moving the joystick back and forth *Xenon*-style; not a good method as violent joystick movements, especially in the heat of battle, are prone to cause accidental weapon changes.

With four players, things can get very cramped, the playing area is too small in relation to the size of the Leathernecks and the chance of being hit by a comrade's bullet high. If the commandos could have fired through each other without harm the game may have been more challenging, but as it stands it's frustrating having to worry about both the enemy *and* your friends' bullets!

The addition of the multiplayer element makes *Leatherneck* a far more enjoyable game than a standard single-player shoot-'em-up. Thought is needed to get past obstacles in each zone as running headlong into the enemy is invariably fatal. *Leatherneck* might have improved on Elite's *Ikari Warriors* in entertainment value had the players not been so restricted by the disability to shoot each other.



One soldier left – and he's on his last legs – the enemies' big guns intend to make short work of him if he's not careful – ST screens



The weapon spewing out spiralling shots is a tough customer for the lone hero to overcome

ATARI ST
Diskette: £19.95

David Whittaker comes up with a good musical composition which suits the game. The horrifyingly realistic sound FX of screams and cries from fatally wounded soldiers and the explosions of grenades all add to the effect of grand-scale carnage.

OVERALL 76%

AMIGA
Diskette: £19.95

Amiga Leatherneck **is exactly the same as the ST game in graphics, sound FX, use of colour and gameplay.**

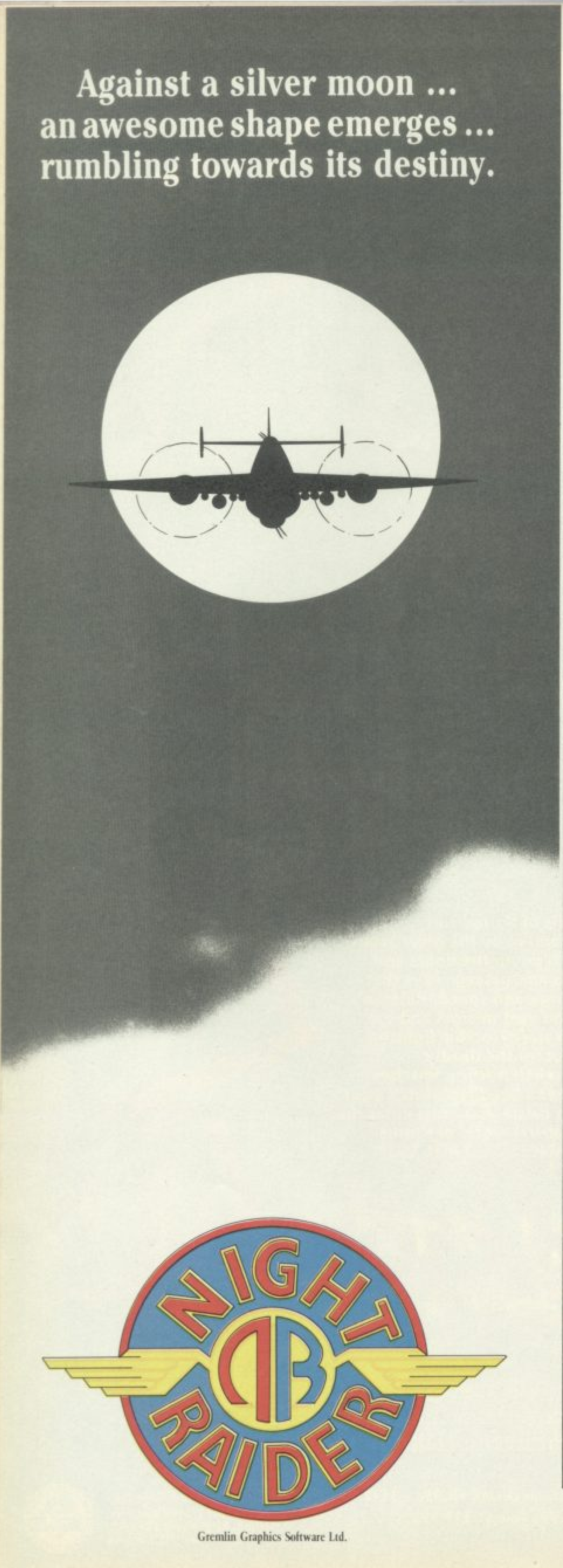
OVERALL 76%

OTHER FORMATS

None planned.

" . . . the multiplayer element makes Leatherneck **far more enjoyable than a single-player shoot-'em-up."**


SMASHING IT'S WAY TOWARDS YOU!
Based on Sega's superb Halls of Kairos coin op game you must free those held captive by the great Satan, KAIROS, himself. Punch down the doors and explore the maze of halls and passageways that hold the key to extra energy and speed. Release those held captive behind vast mirrors and see yourself transform into an invincible fighting warrior. Watch out for the deadly henchmen, avoid the fireball hurling witches punch the fire breathing deer's head and watch your enemies disappear. Alone in battle you must enter the mysterious and supernatural world of Kairos.
DETERMINATION, DEFIANCE, DESTRUCTION... THAT'S...
DESOLATOR
Out of the arcade into the computer... a fury of havoc and destruction straight from the Halls of Kairos.
This game has been manufactured under sub license from Sega Enterprises Ltd., Japan and "Halls of Kairos"™ is a trademark of Alpha Electronics Co. Ltd., Japan, while "Sega" is a trademark of Sega Enterprises Ltd.
SEGA
CBM 64/128 £9.99c £14.99d Spectrum 48/128K £8.99c + 3£12.99d
Amstrad £9.99c £14.99d Atari ST £19.99d
U.S. Gold Ltd., Units 2/3 Holford Way, Holford, Birmingham B6 7AX. Tel: 021 356 3388
U.S. GOLD



A FIST OF

GAUNTLET II
US GOLD

The original *Gauntlet* coin-op conversion came in early-1987 and met with the same phenomenal success as the arcade machine. *Gauntlet II* entered the arcades with favourable reviews and now the ST version of the four-player dungeons and dragons game is here. **Richard Costello** is the programmer, the video graphics were created by **Kevin Bulmer** with the effects squeezed into the ST by sound technician **Bill Allen**.

To recap for those who haven't played either coin-op or home computer version, *Gauntlet II* is a massive hack-'n'-slay eight-way scrolling game viewed from a bird's-eye viewpoint and set in a multitude of dungeons. Up to four players can join in the action as they run around collecting keys, treasure, potions and food while battling the mass of creatures inhabiting the dungeon.

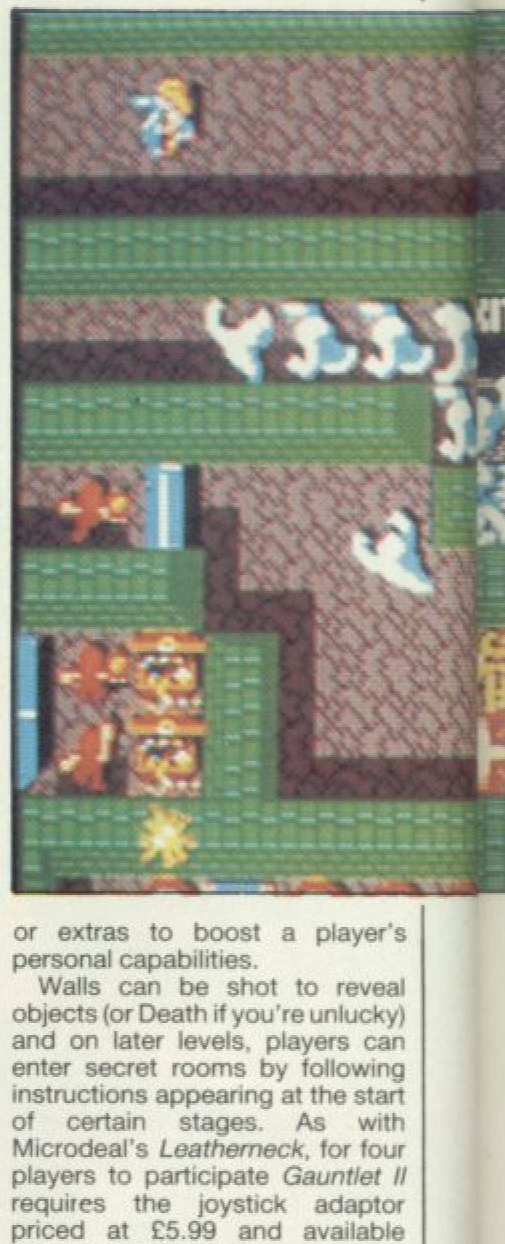
Each player starts off with 2000 health points which decrease constantly. Food can be eaten to restore health, but watch out for poisoned bottles of cider. Keys collected can open doors and unlock chests to reveal the mystery contents, either good or bad.

The creatures of the dungeon include all of those from the original *Gauntlet*: ghosts, rock-throwing lobbers, fire-spitting demons, grunts, invisible sorcerers and the power-draining Death himself are all in unhealthy abundance. A few new creatures have wandered in, including an 'It' monster and a 'That' monster; the former tags a player making monsters chase the unfortunate character, while the latter latches onto anyone it chooses and takes away objects or health points. Health-draining acid puddles and forcefields are also to be found, while stun tiles freeze players in their tracks. A Mugger and Thief appear from time to time stealing health points and objects before running off.

ENTER THE DRAGON

A new and deadly opponent is the Dragon. He makes an appearance on later levels. This red monstrosity spits fireballs and fries players foolish enough to get too close. For much of the time the Dragon guards exits to next levels as well as a hoard of treasure. To kill it, stand well back and aim for the head.

Amongst collectable treasures are amulets giving special abilities such as reflected shots, temporary invisibility, superpower shots, limited invulnerability and even repulsiveness (the latter causes monsters to run away.) Potions are liberally scattered around, providing a smart bomb capability or extras to boost a player's personal capabilities.



Walls can be shot to reveal objects (or Death if you're unlucky) and on later levels, players can enter secret rooms by following instructions appearing at the start of certain stages. As with Microdeal's *Leatherneck*, for four players to participate *Gauntlet II* requires the joystick adaptor priced at £5.99 and available direct from US Gold.

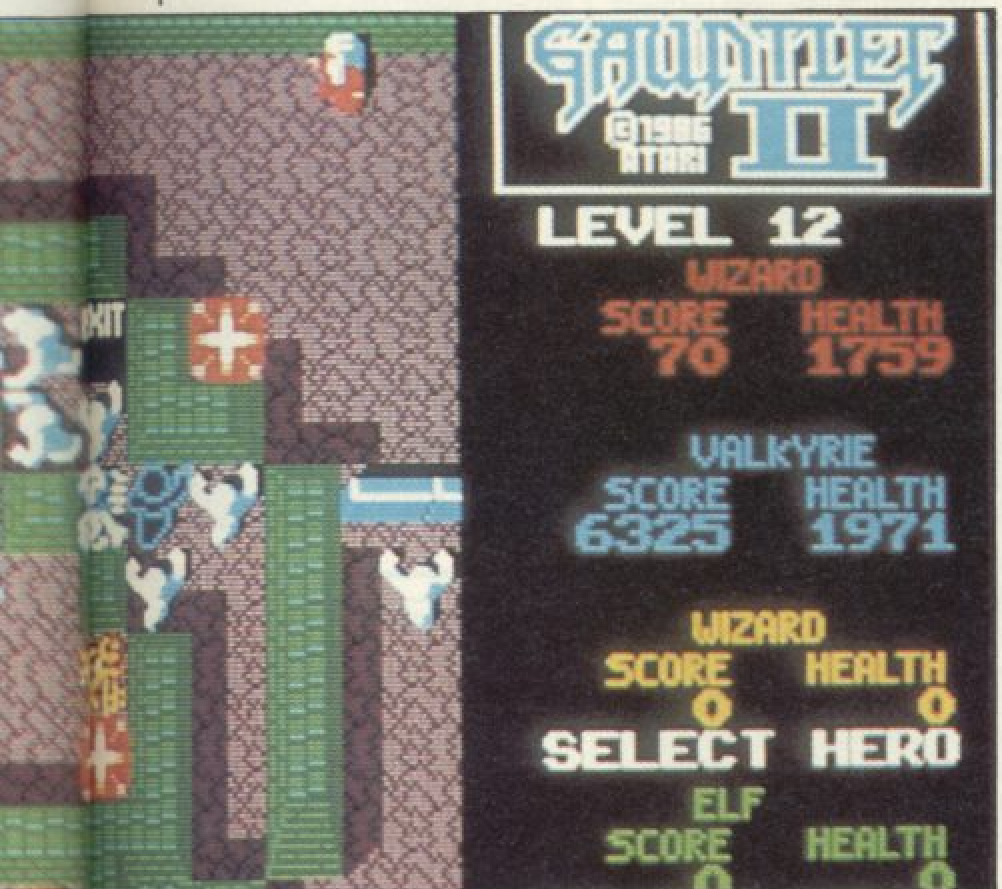
The success of *Gauntlet* and its sequel lies in the four-player action and use of teamwork tactics; these features have translated to the ST perfectly. For one player it could become shallow in long-term entertainment through its repetitive nature, this type of game works best with two or more players.

Following the disappointing conversion of *Gauntlet*, the sequel is something of a miracle. If you're a fan of the coin-op, buy the game and the joystick adaptor, get some friends round and play US Gold's best ST product to date.

IRON TOO



Valkyrie is being set upon by the Grunts on level 8



Level 12 and Valkyrie is still going strong

ATARI ST Diskette: £19.99

Scrolling is excellent, the sampled sound effects (over 700K) are amazingly faithful to the coin-op, though speech is a little muffled in places. The graphics are reduced in size slightly, but to all intents and purposes this IS the arcade machine in its detail, use of colour and accuracy. 1040 ST owners are rewarded with an extra 300K starting sequence. A picture of the arcade machine is shown (complete with the game playing on screen) which proceeds to twist and turn towards the player.

OVERALL 93%

OTHER FORMATS

Already available on Spectrum 48/128K: Cassette £8.99, Amstrad: Cassette £9.99, Diskette £14.99 and Commodore 64/128 Cassette: £9.99, Diskette: £11.99. An Amiga version is being considered but there is no release date or price decided at present.

" . . . US Gold's best ST product to date."

WAR PAPER PATTON

PATTON VERSUS ROMMEL
Electronic Arts

Chris Crawford, author of *Patton Versus Rommel* is also the programmer of the definitive 16-bit strategy game *Balance Of Power*. This, his latest wargame, uses an imaginary situation but one based on an actual battle from WWII. The conflict, known as Operation Cobra, took place in July of 1944 when American Forces undertook an offensive to push Allied divisions forward through France.

Patton of the US Army and Field Marshall Rommel did not encounter each other in the ensuing fight (Patton arrived a week after the start of the offensive while Rommel was withdrawn following injuries from allied fighter attacks.) Chris Crawford has however produced a 'what-if' scenario in which the two military leaders are present at the time of the conflict.

The display is clean, with the map of the Normandy area occupying two-thirds of the screen, and the uncluttered status display/unit information neatly taking up the remainder.

The map is a digitised aerial view of Normandy and uses monochrome to excellently capture the atmosphere of the conflict. The units on screen are of the relatively simple square-character type but also display various strengths and levels of power depending on the function selected. A numerically strong unit is shown as a large circle and morale as a series of cracks which spread in the unit's character as its confidence is weakened.

With three skill levels – beginner, intermediate, expert – the objective for all is the same: the Americans must progress and capture key positions while the Germans must hold off the attacks to the final turn of the game - August 8. Each skill level brings in more functions and commands expanding the strategies and game possibilities available to each commander. Various scales of orders can be issued from single commands to multiple action orders. All commands are issued through icons displayed in the status box, a speedy method both slick and accurate.

HOW THE AMERICANS WON THE WAR

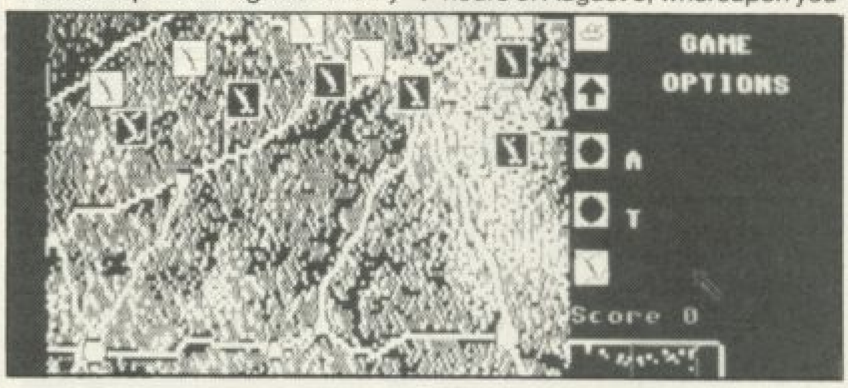
The beginner game uses basic strategies as an introduction, but the strategy element is powerful even at this level, so don't expect a walkover.

The intermediate level brings in an extra feature in the form of modes of execution, whereby a unit can be commanded to take up a normal, defensive or offensive mode and perform against enemy units accordingly. Units may also be set modes for movement. The modes of attack lifts *Patton Versus Rommel* above a lot of wargames, provides a large amount of depth and opens up the possibilities of creating effective strategies against the enemy.

The expert level is a full-blown master conflict offering the player all available options, functions and commands. Akin to the 'nightmare' level in *Balance Of Power*, the expert game is tough and tests your skills to the maximum.

At the end of each turn, Patton or Rommel or both (depending on who is playing whom) offer words of wisdom based on the player's implementation of strategies and their effectiveness in operation.

The game continues to the last hours of August 8, whereupon you



IT'S ALL GREEK TO ME

HERCULES
Gremlin Graphics

The Spectrum version of *Hercules* is credited to two people: **Des O'Toole** for coding and **Cheryl** handling graphics. The Commodore version, by contrast, enjoys a veritable horde: **John Tometzki** (programming) **Andy Morton** (music), **Norman Illings** and **Bob Hawker** (graphics), while design needed **Nicholas Mills**, **John Tometzki** and **Des O'Toole**. Collectively all these people help make up **Cynus Software**.

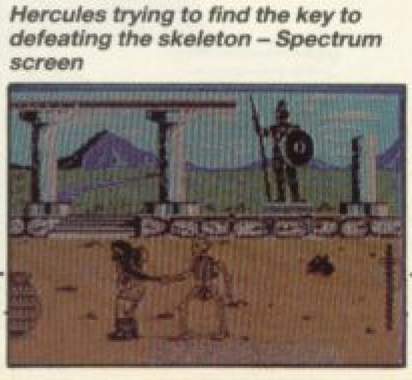
Hercules, son of Zeus the Olympian king of gods, and the man famous for his 12 impossible tasks, joined Jason for many adventures in search of the Golden Fleece. As one of Jason's Argonauts he fought against a horde of skeletons, and it is this battle which the game celebrates.

You (Hercules) fight one skeleton after another – while simultaneously attempting to collect all 12 Herculean Tasks, represented by glowing icons falling from the top of the screen. To collect the Tasks, Hercules hits them with his club. When he has them all he can then go on to his final confrontation with Nessus, a massive centaur.

The weapons are club, fists and feet. In true *Barbarian* fashion eight combat moves are accessed with fire pressed, all given names such as Mountain Shaker and Pluto's Messenger. There's even an overhead blow much like the decapitation move in the Palace game, but it can be a source of irritation since pushing up without fire pressed turns Hercules to face the other way.

A more original touch is the magical ability of the creatures which can only be harmed when standing over a writhing snake depicted at the bottom of the screen. When Hercules is doing well the snake shortens, if he's losing, it helpfully lengthens. To further complicate matters a spider descends from the screen's top to steal already collected Labours. Hercules must hit the spider to stop this happening. All the Aegean mythological fun fails

Hercules trying to find the key to defeating the skeleton – Spectrum screen



Thank the Gods the enemy is not a Majortaur – Commodore screen



SPECTRUM
Cassette: £7.99
Diskette: £12.99

The Spectrum version awards only one life and energy is represented as a tug-of-war between Hercules and the skeletons. Graphically Hercules and his enemies are well represented, but sluggish to respond to controls.

OVERALL 44%

are given a performance rating, along with special treatment if your performance was exceptional.

Patton Versus Rommel is one of those delightful wargames which looks – and to a certain extent is – simple in play but has enough strategy to maintain interest. It also offers the option for one or two players.

COMMODORE 64/128
Diskette: £14.95

The graphics are well thought out, presented neatly and not just a mass of statistics and characters cluttering up the screen. With three skill levels and a considerable amount of game possibilities on offer, this is a deceptively complex game. It is only available on disk.

OVERALL 76%

OTHER FORMATS

No other versions planned.

" . . . one of those delightful wargames, simple in play but enough strategy to maintain interest."

to stimulate; the game's based on a tired formula and fails to bring anything new or excitingly different to the genre.

COMMODORE 64/128
Cassette:
£9.99, Diskette: £14.99

Hercules has three lives and his 12 Labours are helpfully shown on screen, winking out when they're completed. In addition each combatant has his own energy bar. All these factors help make this version easier and a touch more enjoyable than the Spectrum game.

OVERALL 47%

OTHER FORMATS

Conversions are planned for Amstrad: cassette £9.99, disk £14.99, MSX: cassette £7.99 and Atari ST: disk £19.99.

" . . . based on a tired formula, the Aegean mythological fun fails to stimulate . . . "

PHANCY THAT

PHANTASM

Exocet

Exocet's second release continues the recently-formed software house's policy of promoting new talent in the industry. *Phantasm* is written by **Ron De Santi** – this is his first, graphically very polished, release.

A phantasm is an illusion, a figment of the imagination which may be used to escape from a mundane, if not depressing reality. Exocet's *Phantasm* sees your dreams taking a decidedly militaristic turn with you in command of Pegasus, the ultimate space skimmer. Under the power of its incredibly sophisticated engines Pegasus is soaring through a different time and galaxy past an eerily beautiful moon. There's no time to appreciate the scenery, though, because enemy spacecraft wait in ambush and a few dazzling shots disable those wonderful engines in seconds.

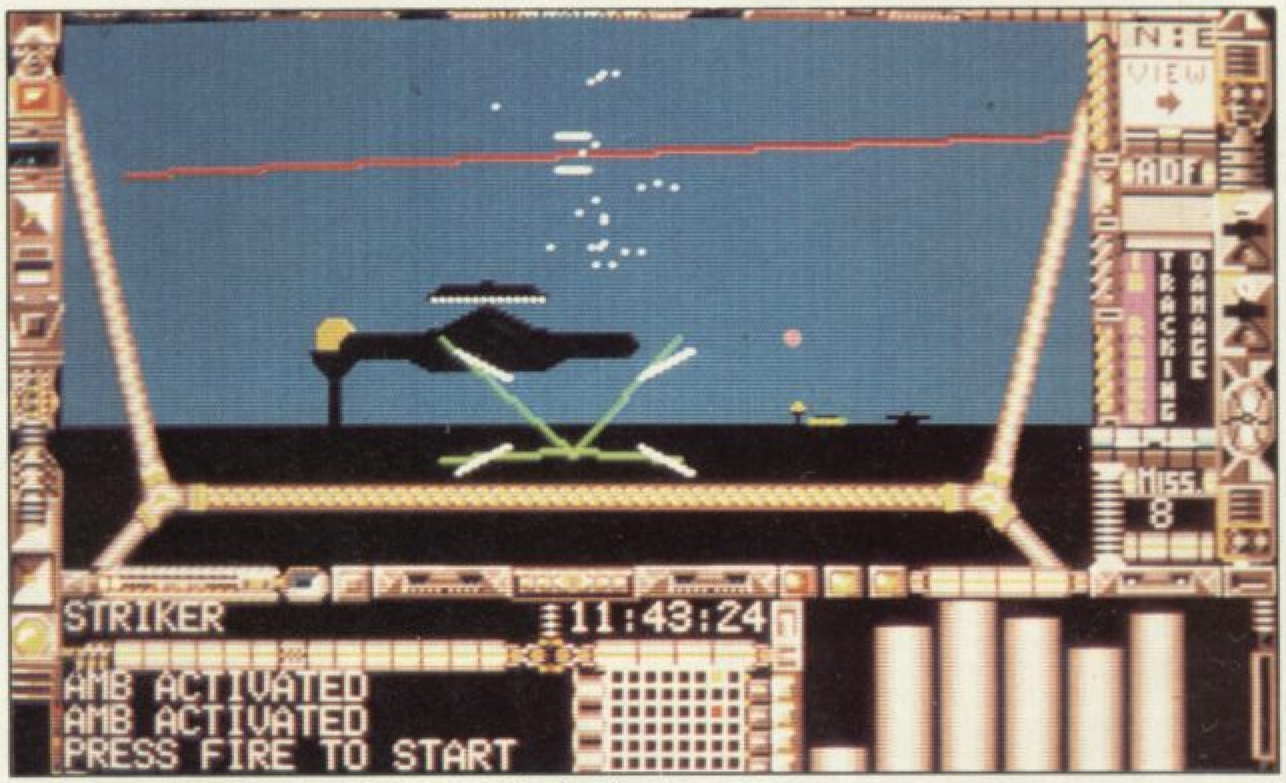
Stricken, Pegasus falls into the moon's gravity well and is inexorably pulled down to its surface. Impulse engines save the vehicle from a fatal crash and provide power to move around – and fight. The moon turns out to be infested with masses of alien craft with little better to do than finish the work begun on the Pegasus. Defeating such overwhelming odds seems impossible, but out of some obscure part of your mind comes knowledge of the mysterious alien Reconstitutions. These weird, and immensely powerful devices are named for their ability to reconstitute the remains of destroyed alien ships. If you can find, and terminate these eight alien artifacts you might just stand a chance . . .

PHLOXER LASERS

Phantasm is presented in classic *Tau Ceti* fashion, offering a pilot's-eye view of 3-D combat a couple of metres above the surface of the alien moon. The joystick controls left and right movement, and speed via forward or backward movement – rarely needed height is controlled with the keyboard. The skimmer's main weapons are Phloxer lasers, but these are augmented by eight AMBs (AntiMissile Blasters), useful for defence purposes. Aiming these weapons is aided by a *Backlash*-style radar scanner superimposed over the combat screen. Since both buildings and enemy ships are shown as the same white dots, practice is required to make best use of this display.

Other instruments include ADF (Automatic Direction Finder) and a tracking indicator; status indicators are represented as windows at the bottom of the screen. Repairs and restocking Pegasus is achieved by slowly colliding with an enemy military supply dump.

There are four levels of increasing difficulty, selectable at the start, to provide a long-term challenge. Completing the game is no easy task, especially without a save option.



Doing battle with a Striker craft in this Tau Ceti look-a-like

ATARI ST Diskette: £19.95

Distinguished by the sort of heavily detailed, and graphically impressive, instrumentation normally associated with Psygnosis, Phantasm **is very attractive at first glance. Presentation is further augmented by some nice sound FX. But highly derivative of** Tau Ceti**, it lacks the depth which made that game so successful. As a pretty and fast shoot-'em-up,** Phantasm **is above-average and might be worth a look.**

OVERALL 73%

OTHER FORMATS

An Amiga conversion should be available towards the end of June. No price yet.

" . . . a pretty and fast shoot-'em-up, Phantasm **is above-average . . . "**

NEVER WALK ALONE

FOOTBALL MANAGER 2

Addictive Games/Prism Leisure

Football Manager, devised by **Kevin Toms** of Addictive Games, has been an incredible success story. Since its creation on the Sinclair ZX-81, six years ago, over half a million copies have sold – the game is even now still selling, proving that you don't need fancy graphics or sound to make for a challenging game with excellent long–term appeal. What about its successor?

Football is the sport and team management is the game. Select a team from the 92 available and the task of taking them through the Football Season begins.

The season begins in Division Four, half a million in the bank and extra money from a sponsoring company. The overriding objective is to progress to Division One and win the major Division and League Cups along the way.

The first difference between this and the prequel is that the team playing each match can be set up to suit the manager's tactics. Eleven players and two substitutes must be available to play, otherwise the match is forfeited.

FIT AS A PARROT

Players have a skill and fitness rating and plays against opposite numbers accordingly. The three standard groups are used: defender, midfield and attacker with a goalkeeper as the final defence. Players can be placed anywhere in the team, although players out of their normal grouping enter matches with a skill of 1, however fitness levels are unaffected.

As before, you have no control over the team during matchplay, all you can do is watch as the game unfolds. The match highlights are best taken with a pinch of salt: at times goals appear to be scored and yet nothing happens, the players move comically and mark each other by following their opposite number's movements exactly. Team tactics are dependent on a number of factors: players' skill and fitness levels and the team's formation and groupings. Using the strategies and tactics learnt from watching matches, you can train players to perfect ball skills by increasing the height and length the ball reaches. A random element is also at work just to make sure no match is a walkover for a superior side. At the halftime mark, you can change the team around, bring on substitutes and create new formations to counter the play and opposition tactics.

As usual, players can suffer injuries during the game (any player having fitness of under 50% cannot play) and they can take some time to recuperate, often missing several matches while receiving medical attention.

UNDER THE MOON

The team finances have to be kept under control at all times. Losses in revenue are inevitable through team overheads, lack of gate receipts and purchasing of players – but provided you remain solvent, you're still in the League.

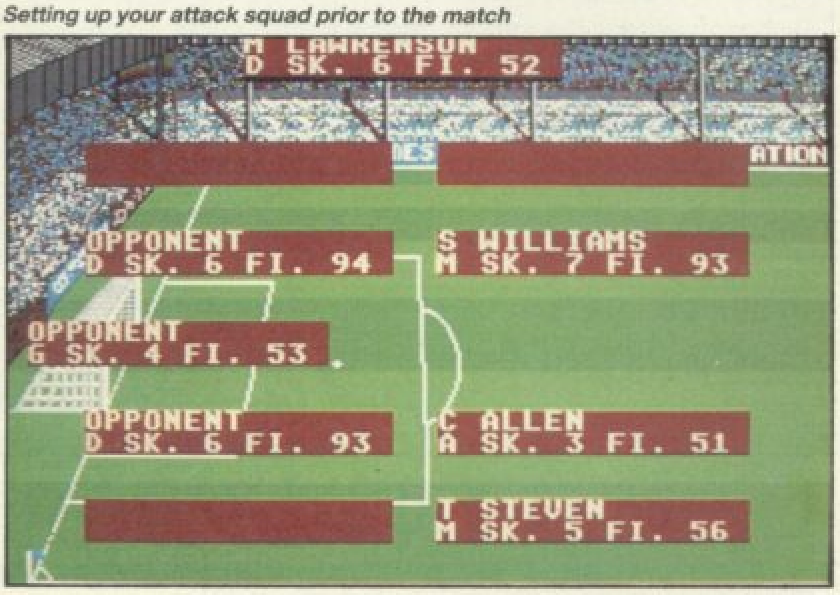
Players can be bought at various prices depending on their skill level and current fitness. Any offers made have to be within acceptable limits otherwise the player in question is either pulled out of the transfer market or bought by another team. As a team moves up through the Divisions, so the value of its players increases, and as matches are won and lost, the team positions in each Division change. After the final game between the other Division teams is played, the top three teams of each Division are promoted with the bottom three suffering relegation.

With six years of football tactics and games to draw ideas from, *Football Manager 2* is a surprising disappointment. There is nothing particularly new to the program to make it worth the wait. However, it has been a long time since *Football Manager* and though this is no significant advance over the original, the sequel is a good game for football fanatics because as it marginally improves on some of *Football Managers* better points, it will no doubt have the same massive long-term appeal.



It's nail-biting time – all you can do is watch as the match unfolds

Setting up your attack squad prior to the match



ATARI ST Diskette: £19.99

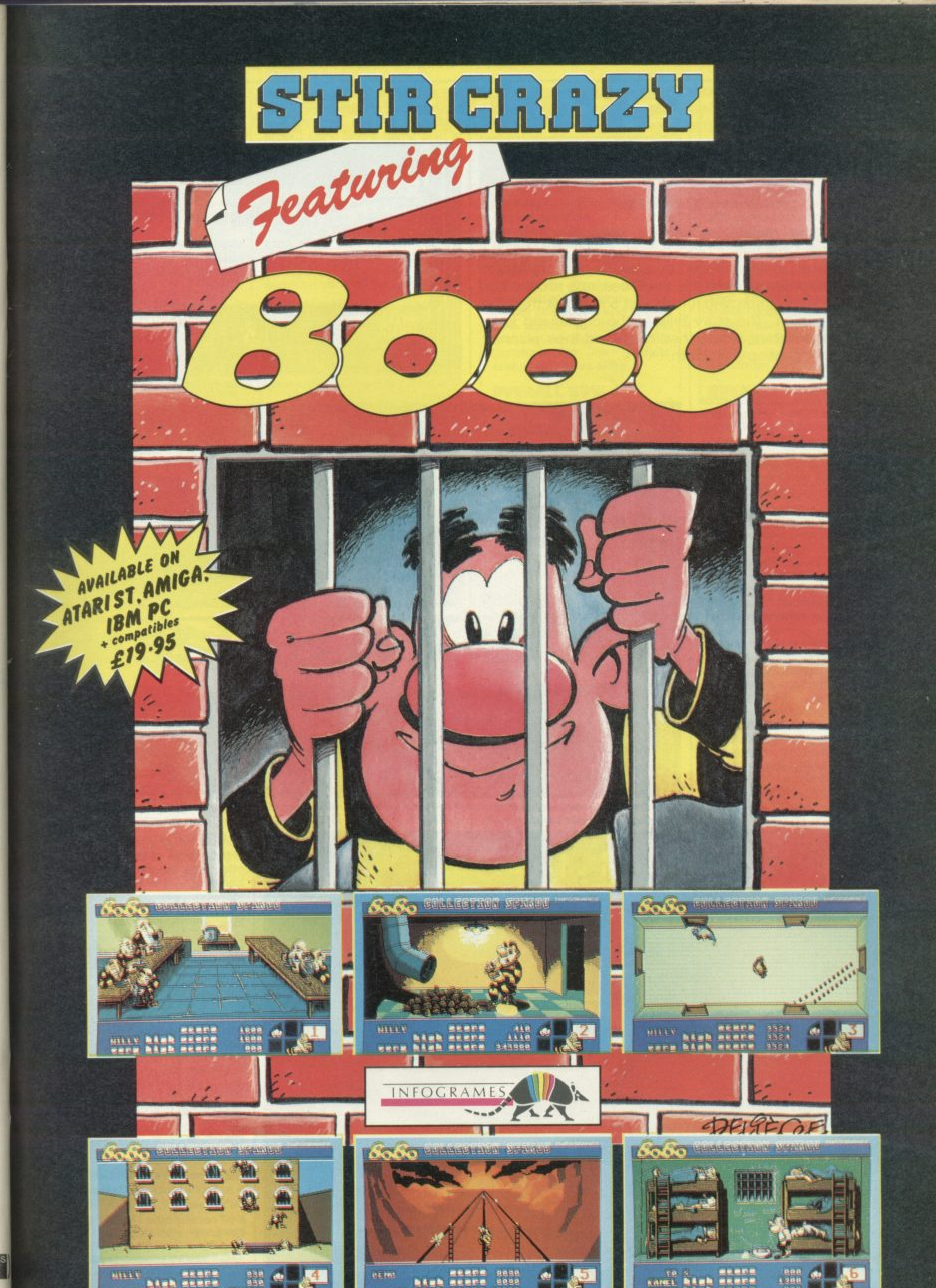
Text is predominant. The match highlights graphics are little better than average, with only spot sound FX. Use of the ST's WIMP environment is kept to a bare minimum with an oversensitive mouse control in use. There are nine selectable skill levels and save/load game position options.

OVERALL 65%

OTHER FORMATS

Also scheduled for release soon on Spectrum 48/128, Commodore 64/128 and Amstrad CPC all at £9.99 cassette and £14.99 Disk, with Amiga and PC versions at £19.99.

" . . . a surprising disappointment and no significant advance over the original . . . "

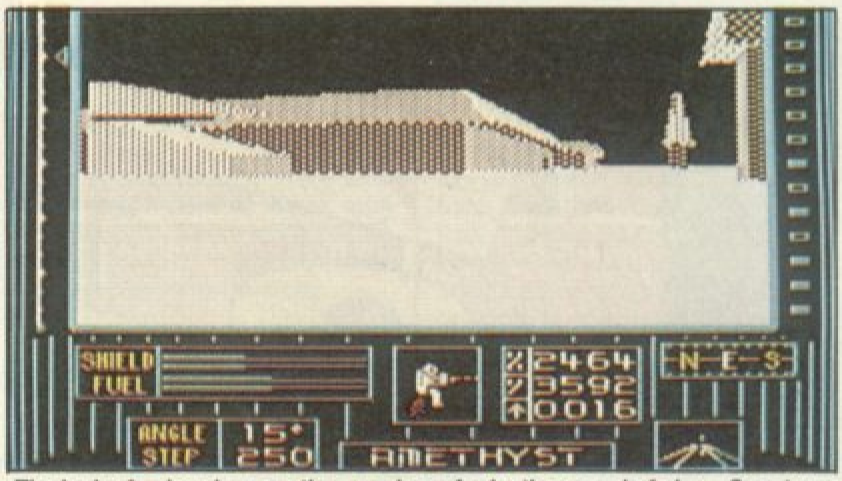


PRESS ANY KEY

FREESCAPE'S BACK

DARK SIDE
Incentive Software

Freescape makes its second appearance in the sequel to last year's blockbuster, *Driller*. The project has been masterminded by *Driller*'s authors **Major Developments** and while the Freescape routine has been technically improved it runs just 5% faster than the *Driller* animation. The story tells of the continuing saga between the Ketars, a banished race, and their planned revenge on the people of Evath.

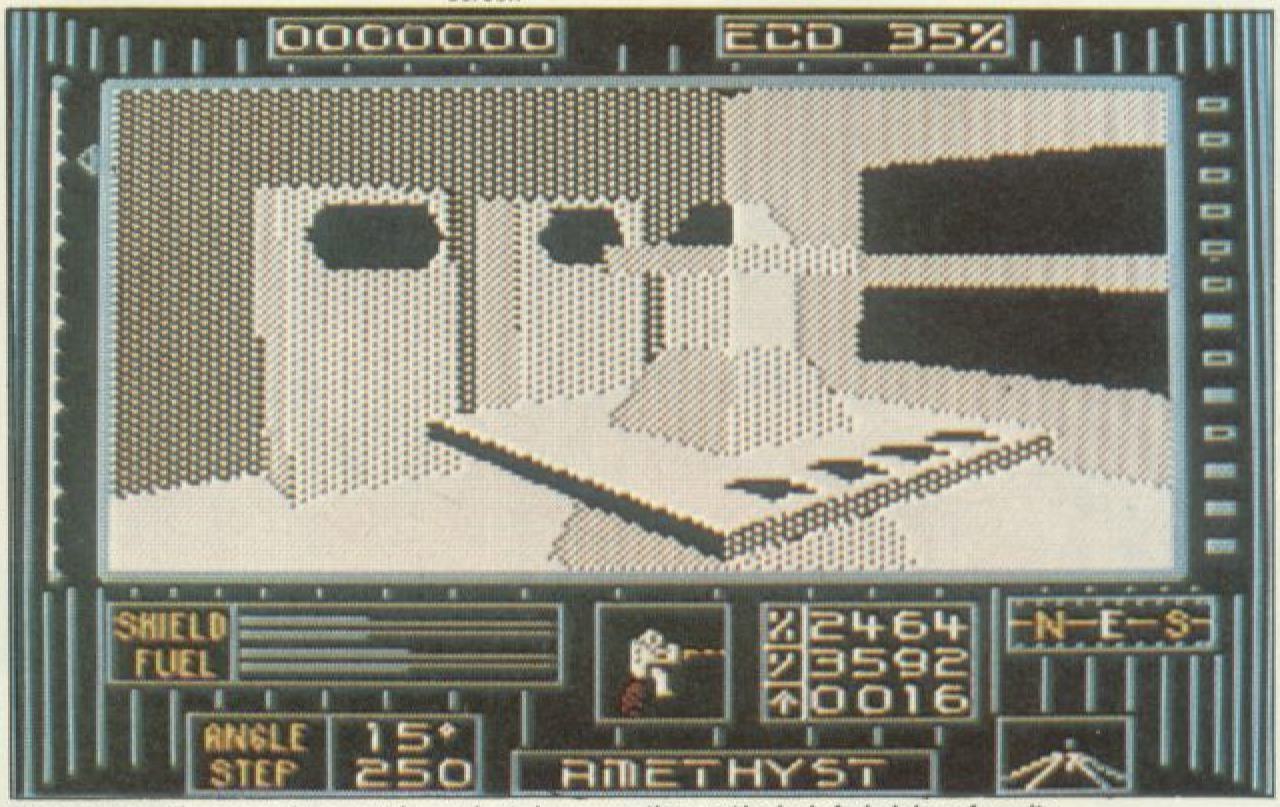


The lack of colour is more than made up for by the speed of play – Spectrum screen

200 years have passed since *Driller*, and the Ketars have completed construction of Zephyr One, a powerful laser weapon. Situated on Evath's moon, Tricuspid, it is aimed straight at Evath intent on destruction. Zephyr One is gradually gaining power from a network of ECDs (Energy Collecting Devices.) Solar power is captured and stored in a crystal at the top of the tower-like apex of the ECDs. The energy – when at sufficient level – is to be sent along the power line matrix covering Tricuspid's surface to subsequently detonate Zephyr One.

Your objective is to patrol the 18 sectors of Tricuspid disabling the ECDs, and cutting the potential power supply from Zephyr One, achieved by shooting the collection crystal. However, if your target ECD is connected between two other active ECDs the shot crystal immediately regenerates. The whole planet is like an intricate chinese puzzle.

As in *Driller*, each of the 18 sectors is viewed in first-person perspective and can be seen from any possible position. *Dark Side* offers the lonely adventurer no transport – it is mostly down to footwork with occasional help from your jet-backpack. The locations are displayed as if seen through a spacesuit visor – this also shows your instrument panel, useful for keeping tabs on direction, whether you're standing, crawling or jet-packing and the amount of fuel and shield energy you have. Shields and fuel can be replenished by collecting power crystals. Other objects to be found on Tricuspid include the tardis-like Telepod and Plexors – which appear as geometric tanks and act as Tricuspid's automatic defence system. However, most objects discovered are part of *Dark Side*'s many puzzles.



There are more than enough geometric puzzles to keep even the most logical of minds busy for quite some time – Spectrum screen



The Commodore 64/128 Dark Side *is not quite ready, but from what we've seen of it, it lacks nothing its 8-bit cousins have – except speed. The screen shot shows the awesome sight of Zephyr One – and it's your job to disarm it*

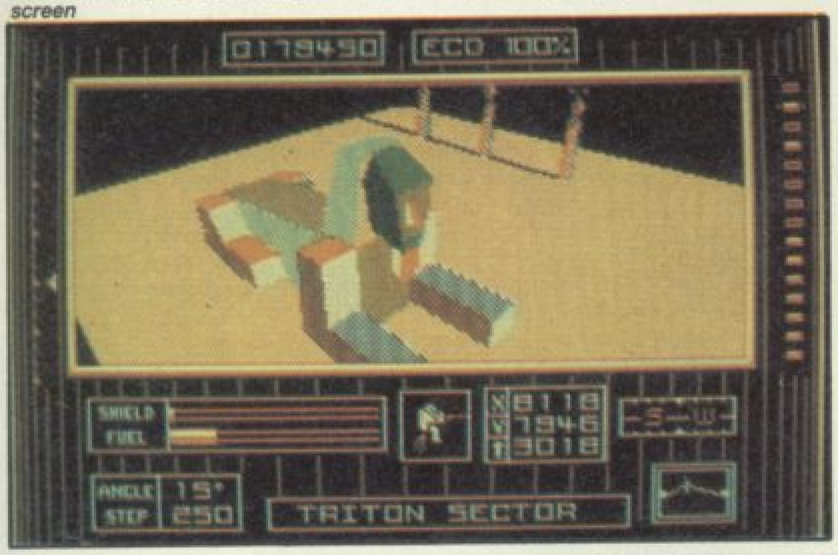
HALF THE GAME

Disabling the ECD matrix is only half the game, there are a host of puzzles to deal with. Solving them is necessary if the game is to be completed: for example, discovering the entrance to the underground network of tunnels makes for easier exploration of Tricuspid.

Many of *Driller*'s features have been incorporated; the adjustable step size, angle of vision, and the load/save facility.

To complete *Dark Side*, all the ECD crystals have to be destroyed (though not in any particular order.) *Dark Side*'s game plan is more involved and demanding than that of its predecessor. Not so much addictive as engrossing, once you have broken into the game it becomes difficult to stop playing. The full potential of Freescape has been realised in *Dark Side*, whereas before step size and angle of vision were interesting, they now become essential parts of the game. *Dark Side*, quite simply, is top class and certainly the truest arcade adventure yet seen.

Tricuspid Sphinx of treachery as the Kretar's power up Zephyr One – Amstrad screen



AMSTRAD CPC
Cassette £9.95
Diskette: £14.95

Similar to *Driller*'s implementation, this machine handles the graphics well, incorporating sharp, defined images. Using graphics mode-1 gives a four-colour display of clear and attractive landscapes. Plenty of spot FX and jingles add spice to the action making Dark Side **an essential purchase for** Driller **addicts and newcomers alike.**

OVERALL 93%

SPECTRUM 48/128
Cassette £9.95
Diskette: £14.95

Playing similarly to the Amstrad version but largely monochromatic – although the colours change from sector to sector. Using effective shading to highlight the landscapes variations, Dark Side **runs slightly faster on the Spectrum. Informative spot FX and sparse music make up the sonics, but it all adds up to a superb package; the sort of game which is keeping the Spectrum market alive.**

OVERALL 93%

OTHER FORMATS

Versions planned are Commodore 64/128, (a mite slow in gameplay at present but Incentive promise more speed; cassette £9.99, disk £12.99. To come are 16-bit conversions for the PC, Atari ST and Amiga (although we are still awaiting ST and Amiga Driller**) later this year.**

"Dark Side **is top class and certainly the truest arcade adventure yet seen."**

PASSING GO!

DELUXE MONOPOLY
Leisure Genius

This is an update of the original *Monopoly* released by Leisure Genius over three years ago. The programming team is **Steve Barrett** (sound), **Antony Scott** (graphics) and **John Baldachin** (programming). Their previous work includes the original *Monopoly*, *Scrabble* and *Cluedo*.

Computer Monopoly is an accurate enough representation of the original to include some rules – such as the auctioning of every property you land on – which many players do without. The game, for those somehow unfamiliar with it, is to travel around a board buying up property squares which, when grouped in streets can have houses and hotels built on them. Should other players land on your property they pay rent applicable to the quality of the property. At the game's conclusion one player ends up owning most of the board since the other players have sold the winner their property to pay rent – a monopoly!

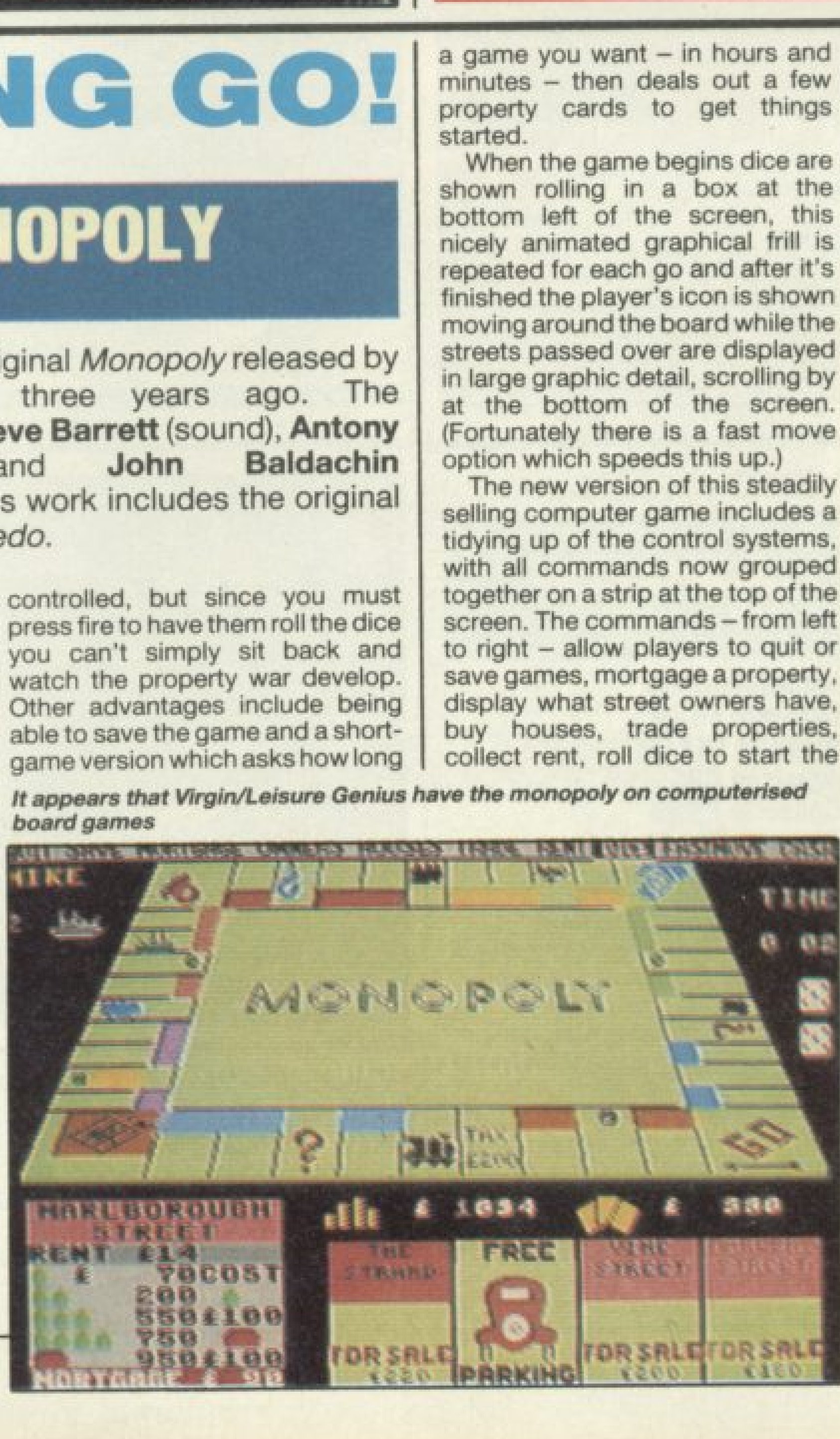
FAST MOVES

The computer game's major advantage is that the program provides an opponent; all six possible players can be computer-controlled, but since you must press fire to have them roll the dice you can't simply sit back and watch the property war develop. Other advantages include being able to save the game and a short-game version which asks how long a game you want – in hours and minutes – then deals out a few property cards to get things started.

When the game begins dice are shown rolling in a box at the bottom left of the screen, this nicely animated graphical frill is repeated for each go and after it's finished the player's icon is shown moving around the board while the streets passed over are displayed in large graphic detail, scrolling by at the bottom of the screen. (Fortunately there is a fast move option which speeds this up.)

The new version of this steadily selling computer game includes a tidying up of the control systems, with all commands now grouped together on a strip at the top of the screen. The commands – from left to right – allow players to quit or save games, mortgage a property, display what street owners have, buy houses, trade properties, collect rent, roll dice to start the next turn, enable the fastmove option and switch between showing a player's finances or not. The smoothness of these operations, which can be controlled by joystick or keys, is let down slightly by the fiddling nature of things such as placing houses individually on their properties.

It appears that Virgin/Leisure Genius have the monopoly on computerised board games



COMMODORE 64/128
Cassette: £12.95
Diskette: £15.95

The board game is well-translated, with some nice spot FX like the tune which plays when you pass GO. For a game of acquisition, the lack of money and mortgage cards to conceal under your side of the board is a serious, if inevitable omission, but if you want a computer opponent, this game provides it in a very well presented context.

OVERALL 74%

OTHER FORMATS

Conversions are planned for Atari ST, Amiga, PC and Apple II – but no information on prices or release dates as yet.

"The new version includes a tidying up of the control systems."

ETERNAL TRIANGLE

BERMUDA PROJECT
Mirrorsoft

Source of myth and mystery, many ships and aeroplanes have vanished without trace since time immemorial in the Bermuda Triangle. Few of the lost in this area of intrigue have survived or returned to report strange happenings. Of course many more craft have traversed the triangle without the slightest hint of an alien occurrence. Film, books and software have long used the phenomenon as inspiration for material, now Mirrorsoft present their notions in the guise of an arcade-adventure.

Opening with a plane crash to rival *Ikari Warriors*, *Bermuda Project* gives the initial impression of attention to detail, a trademark of Mirrorsoft's recent products. Following the less-than-comfortable landing on a small island within the triangle, an

I don't think this pilot will be flying again in a hurry

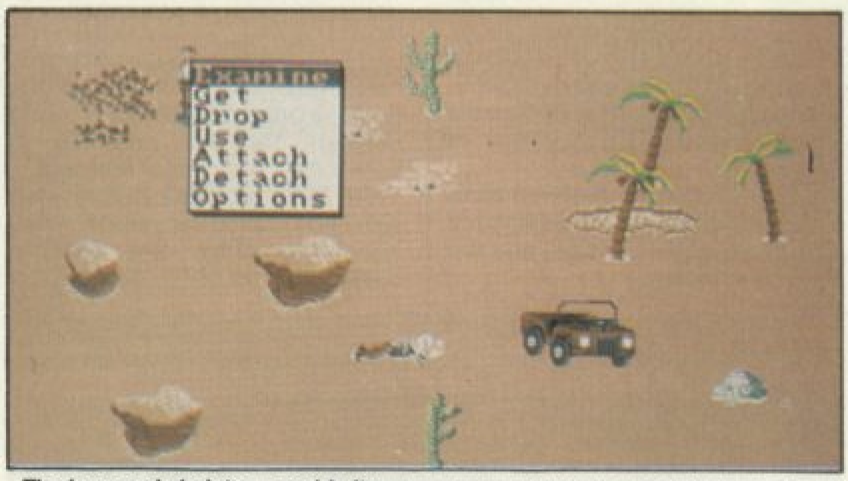


enticing tune plays and the message to insert disk B nestles beneath an attractive graphical representation of the game to come.

The aim of *Bermuda Project* is to get off the island. You find yourself staggering to your feet after being hurled from the plane – by now merrily burning away. If you want to salvage anything before it blows up your first task is to extinguish the flames. Real-time plays a large part in the game so pausing for too much thought is not recommended. Successfully dousing the fire reveals a number of items to add to your inventory – as does following the footprints found close to the wreckage.

MY RUCKSACK ON MY BACK

Playing very much as an adventure – with animated graphics rather than text – *Bermuda Project* takes brain rather than brawn to complete. Viewed from above, you are depicted as a well animated man (complete with rucksack), walking around the screen in a sometimes quite erratic fashion. Movements and decisions are controlled by the mouse and options are called up in windows. The usual Examine, Get, Inventory, Load/Save etc are all there to utilise. The scenery scrolls only when the character is at the screen's edge, but since there are



The jeep and skeleton provide items necessary to your quest, but watch out for the scorpion!

few sudden deaths waiting in the wings this is not as irritating as it might have been. Sound effects are present throughout and although basic, they can warn of impending danger or obstacles.

Bermuda Project – an interesting idea – provides sufficient tasks to keep you busy, and this, coupled with the attractive screen displays, makes a passable game for players with an adventure bent.

ATARI ST Diskette: £24.99

Mouse control of the main character is frustrating at times although the scrolling is comparatively good. The island scenery is attractive but sparse and sound FX leave a lot to the imagination. However there is some small in-built incentive to get somewhere – although the lack of hints available make it perhaps tougher than it should be.

OVERALL 61%

OTHER FORMATS

An Amiga version will be released very soon, price £24.99

" . . . an interesting idea provides sufficient tasks although tougher than it should be."

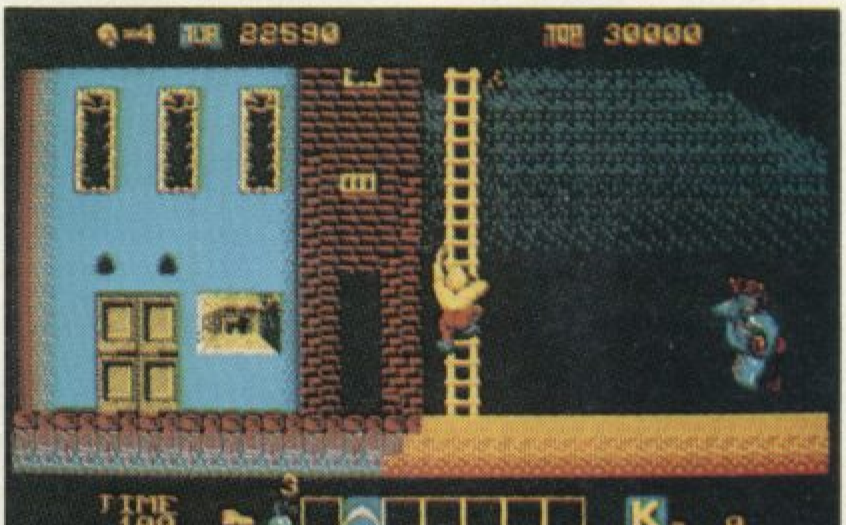
VERSION UPDATE

KARNOV
Electric Dreams

Commodore 64:
Cassette £9.99
Diskette £14.99
Amstrad CPC:
Cassette £9.99
Diskette £14.99

IT IS the task of Karnov, fire-breathing Russian, to free his land of evil Ryu's demons and retrieve the stolen treasures of Babylon. His battle takes place in the horizontally-scrolling Kingdom of Creaminai – see the full review in TGM**007**.

The overall look of the three 8-bit games is one of extraordinary similarity – as if the program has simply been down-loaded from one to the other. This technique works fine on the Amstrad but fails miserably on the Commodore 64/128. The gameplay on the latter is



Looking very similar to the Commodore 64 version, the Amstrad game incorporates the best gameplay

appallingly slow with abysmal sound accompaniment. Graphics on both machines are blocky but the Amstrad gets away with it, and in fact comes a very close second to the Spectrum game.

Karnov is a multiload game which makes cassette versions more tedious to play, buy the disk game if you can.

COMMODORE 64/128: OVERALL 44%
AMSTRAD CPC: OVERALL 81%

CUBBING TOGETHER

VIXEN
Martech

Corrine Russell certainly fills the packaging Martech gave her for the cover picture, but does the game pack as much in? The programmers of *Vixen* are based in Brighton and call themselves **Intelligent Design**. Their previous game for Martech was the graphically impressive *Catch-23*.

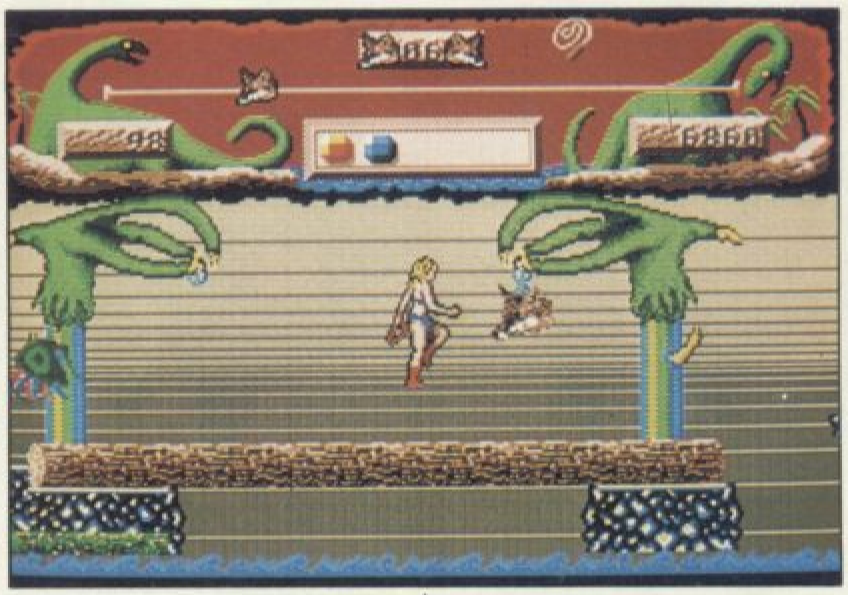
The planet Granath spins in a parallel universe where dinosaurs remain the kings of terror. Over eons the terrible lizards have hunted most mammals, and almost every human, to extinction. Only one, magical woman remains to resist them – the eponymous Vixen. Raised by foxes after her abandonment in the wilderness, Vixen is able to transform into a fox when necessary. Armed with this gift and her lethal whip, she's a formidable heroine.

Vixen is composed of a series of levels, the majority on the planet's surface, with bonus screens played underground where Vixen becomes her foxy alter-ego. The main levels have the superbly digitised woman running to get to the tunnel before time runs out. Attempting to prevent this and make her their next meal are a wide variety of small, but deadly dinosaurs. Vixen can kill these with her whip, though some take several hits – unless she is armed with the Mega Whip found in the bonus level.

This section is accessed by completing a level with the Fox Time indicator, at the top of the screen, on maximum. Increasing Fox Time is done by collecting Fox's heads hidden in bags hanging from trees. Using the whip exposes what's in them, as well as the contents of small obelisks on the ground. Contained within the obelisks are gems (points), clocks (extra time), skull-and-cross bones (smart bomb), fox's heads (lives) and mystery objects which boost your score.

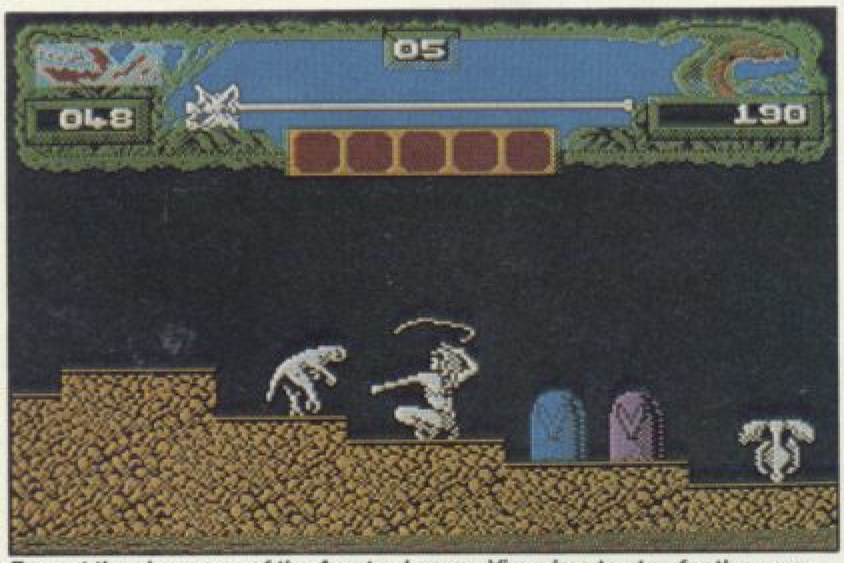
At the end of a level the amount of remaining time is translated into extra points and, if Fox Time is sufficient, Vixen is shown metamorphosing into her bushy-tailed other self. The aim of the bonus game is to collect as many gems as possible while still getting to the end of the level. Some obelisks contain Mega-Gems, and, unless Vixen loses them by dying, they add bonus points at the end of a level.

Much has been made of the game's intendedly sexy packaging, but beneath the skimpy leotard, and admittedly very fine graphics on both versions (and good tune on the ST), *Vixen* is an attractive and involving *Thundercats*-type program without offering anything significantly new.



In possession of the Mega-whip, the enemies of Vixen are dealt deadly blows – ST screen

Weapon poised, the foxy lady prepares to give the enemy a taste of her anger. Less colourful than the Atari ST game, this version is faster and the main character is equally well animated – Spectrum screen



Even at the slow pace of the Amstrad game, Vixen has to stop for the occasional rest – Amstrad screen))



COMMODORE 64/128
Cassette: £9.99
Diskette: £12.99

Lacking the neat main-character animation of most of the other versions – a few frames of movement are missing – the game makes up for it with speed. Gameplay is further improved by an in-game tune – non-existent on other 8-bit versions – that adds to the atmosphere. Nevertheless the game remains weak and repetitive and is limited by the inclusion of only one version.

OVERALL 61%

SPECTRUM
Cassette: £8.99
Diskette: £14.99

No less than on the ST, Vixen is excellently animated, though lack of background graphics makes it sparse. Playability is much the same, albeit with five lives instead of the ST's ten. No multiload, but the tape has three game versions, each with a title page, but not markedly different in-game graphics.

OVERALL 60%

ATARI ST
Diskette: £19.99

A superbly digitised loading screen establishes consistently professional use of ST graphics. Scrolling is below par, but adequate, and eclectic backgrounds work well, with animal camouflage sometimes too effective.

OVERALL 61%

AMSTRAD CPC
Cassette: £9.99
Diskette: £14.99

A nice title page, but the game rapidly deteriorates from this point. Scrolling is poor, the main character is barely adequate and moves very slowly. With mediocre graphics and poor playability it's very much the worst of the group – even with three game versions.

OVERALL 42%

OTHER FORMATS

A conversion is expected for the Amiga: £19.99

" . . . an attractive, involving program without offering anything significantly new."

VERSION UPDATE

PLATOON
Ocean

ATARI ST: £19.95
PC: £19.95

ALMOST six months after the original 8-bit games came out to a critical reception comparable to that of the movie (TGM**003** C64 92%, TGM**004** Spectrum 84%) the 16-bit versions are finally appearing. The Atari ST and, as yet unseen Amiga, conversions are by **Choice Software**, while **Nick Sheard** has managed the PC version solo.

Both games adhere closely to the original structure, with six distinct sections. The first has the player guiding a platoon member through a maze-like pattern of jungle paths. While avoiding the gunfire and traps of the Viet Cong you must find the explosives required to blow up a bridge. The next level involves the platoon searching a village for essential equipment and a trapdoor.

Section three opens the trapdoor and gives you the 3-D point of view of a soldier in the VC's tunnel network. An 'intelligent' cross-sight allows you to move through the tunnels, shoot enemies when they appear and, in different circumstances, examine objects. Flares and a compass should be collected to go on to section four where you emerge in a bunker. An enemy night attack must be fought off with some accurate shooting and judicious use of flares to illuminate the jungle when necessary. You may survive only to learn an American air strike is planned on your area of the jungle. A compass indicates the direction you are facing but it's up to you to find the correct way to a foxhole. Unfortunately once there you find evil Sergeant Barnes hidden inside, determined that no one else should share it with him. Five direct grenade hits on the foxhole are necessary to save your platoon.

The PC version begins with a tune which would embarrass a Spectrum, but sound is subsequently rarely used, whereas the Atari ST game has continuous background music and suitably blood-curdling FX. Graphics on both machines are fine although the ST's are by far the best seen so far for this game – an EGA card option would have been nice for the PC. *Platoon* remains a tough game to play and the flick-screen effect of the PC adds nothing to aid your task. The ST scrolls quite well (although the game slows down dramatically when there are more than two soldiers on screen at one time) and high scores are thoughtfully saved to disk. Both versions should provide a long, hard slog before the final foxhole confrontation.



Beneath the awful colour scheme lies a very good game – PC screen

More colourful and sonically pleasing than the PC version although play slows down noticably when two or more soldiers are on-screen – Atari ST screen


PC: OVERALL 83%
ATARI ST: OVERALL 90%

CRACKING THE YOKE

SONS OF LIBERTY
SSI/US GOLD

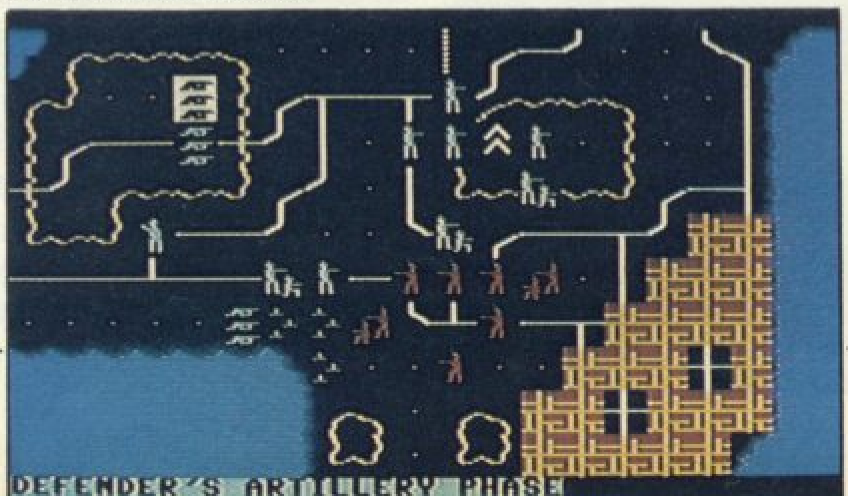
Turning from that ever-popular wargame subject, the American Civil War, SSI turn back to the end of the 18th century and the war of American Independence. The newly emerging American colonials fought British troops in a bid to free their country from the British yoke. *Sons Of Liberty* uses the conflicts of Bunker Hill, Monmouth and Saratoga in this opportunity to change history. With over 50 strategy games under their webbing, the California-based company is undoubtedly leaders in the (battle)field.

You may control either side in any of the three scenarios, using either keyboard or joystick for the main control functions and commands. Each side controls infantry and cavalry with artillery providing the facility for ranged combat. A non-hidden/hidden movement option is offered together with three skill levels: basic, intermediate and advanced. Operation Points control the amount of moving, combat and other actions that units perform.

Different terrain affects point expenditure in movement. Ammunition levels can be redefined, reinforcement times changed and handicaps placed on either side in the form of difficulty levels. Unit morale, efficiency and fatigue all play influential parts in the wargame. The intermediate level brings in additional functions including unit disruption, redefining unit formations, and a reconnaissance option. Line-of-sight rules also come into effect at this level.

The advanced level includes options to build fortifications, command units with their own individual leaders and use a Command Control rating based on a unit's current state, it also only awards a limited supply of ammunition. The Command Control rating determines a unit's strength and the number of Operation Points available.

Despite the fact that SSI are still using the block character graphics of half a decade ago, *Sons Of Liberty* is a winner with its comprehensive strategic play and possibilities.

Reviewing the situation on the island of Bunker hill, looking towards Breed's Hill – Commodore 64 screen


COMMODORE 64/128
Diskette: £24.99

As well as better presentation, what Sons Of Liberty **really needs is a reference card listing the commands – essential considering the number available to the player. However, the game is what we have now come to expect from SSI, powerful strategy combined with an extensive array of commands to use and implement. A pity SSI are still making little use of the host machine's capabilities.**

OVERALL 77%

OTHER FORMATS

Sons Of Liberty **is to be released on disk for the Atari range of computers at £24.99 along with a PC version priced at £29.99.**

" . . . powerful strategy with an extensive array of commands to use . . . "

SO MACHO

DESOLATOR
US GOLD

The latest in the continuing wave of arcade conversions is probably unique in using an original name rather than the arcade game's. This conversion of **Sega**'s *Halls Of Kairos* was programmed by **Source Software**, also responsible for **Activision**'s *Predator*.

Mac is a heroic young adventurer destined to fight his way through the halls of Kairos rescueing kidnapped children hidden behind the castle's mirrors. Punching shields breaks the power of mirrors releasing the children trapped inside. Once a sufficient number of infants have been collected, Mac transforms into Macho Man and with his boosted strength 'desolates' all in his path. Such magical transformations are vital in a struggle with an enemy as great as Lucifer himself.

BIG MAC FRIES

Desolator begins with Mac having just entered the enemy's territory which is segmented by numerous walls – these can be crossed by pushing open doors, punching down flimsy barriers and teleporting via warp tiles. Trying to prevent you reaching the final level is a horde of villains ranging from zombie-like Henchmen to Firemen who hurl fireballs and Armor who throws swords. Your fists can destroying them, but weapons such as bombs (Spectrum) or boomerangs (C64/Amstrad) may be found to more easily dispatch your foes. Alternatively Mac can do forward flips to pass by especially powerful opposition.

Scattered along your bloody route are money bags and question marks that turn your enemies into treasure chests – even the fire-spitting deers' heads can be turned to your advantage. At the end of each level there is a confrontation with Kairo's endlessly multiplying, fire-breathing heads. If you manage to destroy all the heads it's on to the next level – and load.



Mac fights his way through Kairos's hordes to free the children – Amstrad screen

AMSTRAD
Cassette: £9.99
Diskette: £14.99

Incorporating much bolder colours than the C64, gives it a more cheerful if somewhat less evocative look. As on the C64, progress is perhaps a little too easy, although one improvement is a panel on the left showing how close Mac is to finishing the game. Another unique feature of this version is a flickscreen rather than scrolling presentation – fortunately this doesn't affect gameplay. Sound is similarly effective, but limited to sparse FX to help make this only an average game.

OVERALL 63%

SPECTRUM
Cassette: £8.99
Diskette: £12.99

Purely monochromatic, this version compensates with a more detailed, realistic 3-D effect. The satisfaction of sending the solid-looking enemies flying is much better than on other versions, but during the end-of-level confrontation with the heads, spotting the fireballs is harder, making success that much difficult – if not impossible. 128K owners benefit from a single-load game, even so this arcade conversion never really stands out from the crowd.

OVERALL 67%

COMMODORE 64/128 Cassette: £9.99
Diskette: £14.99

Like the Amstrad game, this version sacrifices detail for colour. It works quite well, if a little blandly, and with the characters smaller than on the Spectrum there's more room to manoeuvre, making it possible to progress merely by avoiding enemies. This slight flaw affects cassette owners more as it brings up the multi-load that much quicker. Nevertheless the smoothness of the scrolling and a reasonable in-game tune help make it all a generally enjoyable, if not remarkable conversion.

OVERALL 65%

OTHER FORMATS

An ST version with several added features is expected at £19.99.

" . . . generally enjoyable, if not remarkable conversion"

VERSION UPDATE

BEYOND THE ICE PALACE
Elite Systems

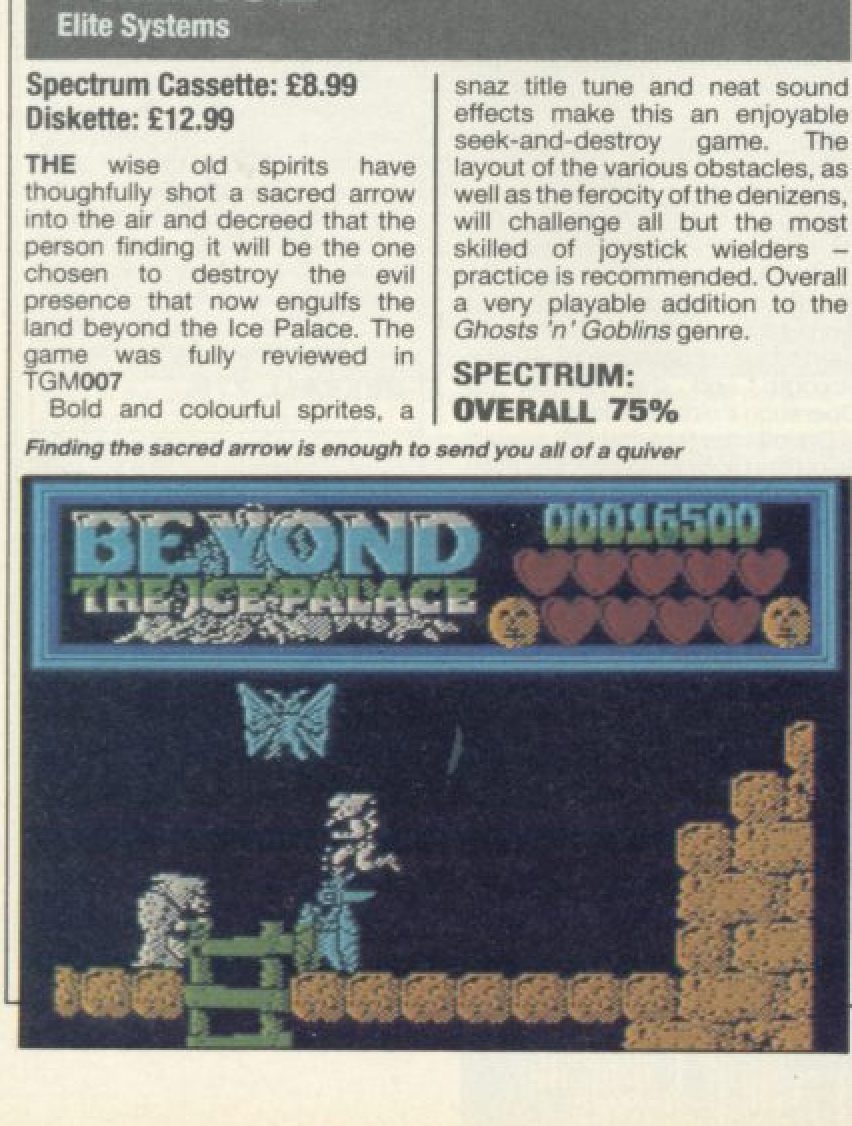
Spectrum Cassette: £8.99
Diskette: £12.99

THE wise old spirits have thoughfully shot a sacred arrow into the air and decreed that the person finding it will be the one chosen to destroy the evil presence that now engulfs the land beyond the Ice Palace. The game was fully reviewed in TGM007

Bold and colourful sprites, a snaz title tune and neat sound effects make this an enjoyable seek-and-destroy game. The layout of the various obstacles, as well as the ferocity of the denizens, will challenge all but the most skilled of joystick wielders – practice is recommended. Overall a very playable addition to the *Ghosts 'n' Goblins* genre.

SPECTRUM:
OVERALL 75%

Finding the sacred arrow is enough to send you all of a quiver



I SPIDER ROBOT IN THE JUNGLE

ARAC
PC LEISURE/PRISM LEISURE

Originally an 8-bit release on the Commodore 64/128 in late 1986, *Arac* was released in America in the Epyx Maxx Out! series as *Spiderbot*. The game has been licensed back from Epyx and released in the UK through PC Leisure (a new subsidiary of Prism Leisure). The PC version being written by FACS Entertainment Software.

Things are going horribly wrong in the electronic jungle. Three nuclear reactors in the nearby Citadel are going critical and unless shut down, the jungle is going to permanently glow in the dark.

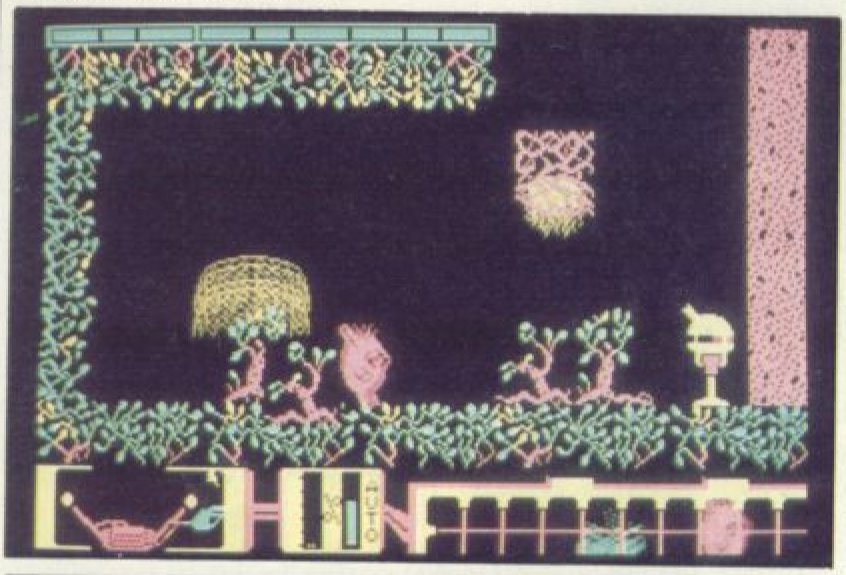
Arac the robot, armed only with a net, enters the Citadel to try to stop the meltdown – 30 real-time minutes away. The Citadel is guarded by plasma-bolt-firing robots and with only a net to help him Arac has his work cut out. Fortunately, he is capable of transforming into Spiderbot, a radioactive bolt-firing arachnidroid. He does this by finding and attaching to himself two robotic legs and a power generator. Arac can only run trundle through the complex and spring up onto low ledges while Spiderbot can scuttle along floors and hang from ceilings. In some screens, the ceiling is the only way to progress.

SMARTIE WEB

By throwing the net at various creatures inhabiting the Citadel, Arac can store them in his portable cage for use when needed. Once a creature is released from the cage, it will, in return for its freedom, perform a specific task. The Rock Hopper opens the Fist needed to activate Spiderbot, the Stinger helps Arac reach high ledges, Big Borer gnaws through walls, the Ray blinds snooping Citadel radar and the Man of War fuses electronics opponents. Some of the creatures drain Arac's energy on contact – caged creatures escape if Arac's energy is too low. Energy is also lost by falling down deep holes, taking fire from robot guards or by staying too long in energy-draining Spiderbot mode. Lose all energy and the game finishes in defeat.

Arac can be played either as a full or short game, with the robot having to start from scratch in the former, or, in the latter, begin with the Spiderbot already assembled and a few creatures trapped in the cage.

Arac my brain for a caption – the heroic droid makes a net loss, perhaps he should utilise Spiderbot mode



PC
Diskette: £9.99

The traits of the PC strike again with the familiar limitation of four colours on screen (CGA is the only colour mode catered for), abysmal sound and equally dire graphics. The action is standard platforms-and-ladders, but it has the simple appeal common to many games of this type. While Starquake (reviewed in TGM 007) had speed and action, Arac is more sedate. Little pressure is placed on the player and it's all very uninspiring both graphically and in play. The Spiderbot mode and the puzzles make it more of an arcade adventure than most and as such it is enjoyable and absorbing, if a little tired looking.

OVERALL 60%

OTHER FORMATS

Amiga and Atari ST versions are scheduled for release around November at £12.99 each.

" . . . enjoyable and absorbing . . . "

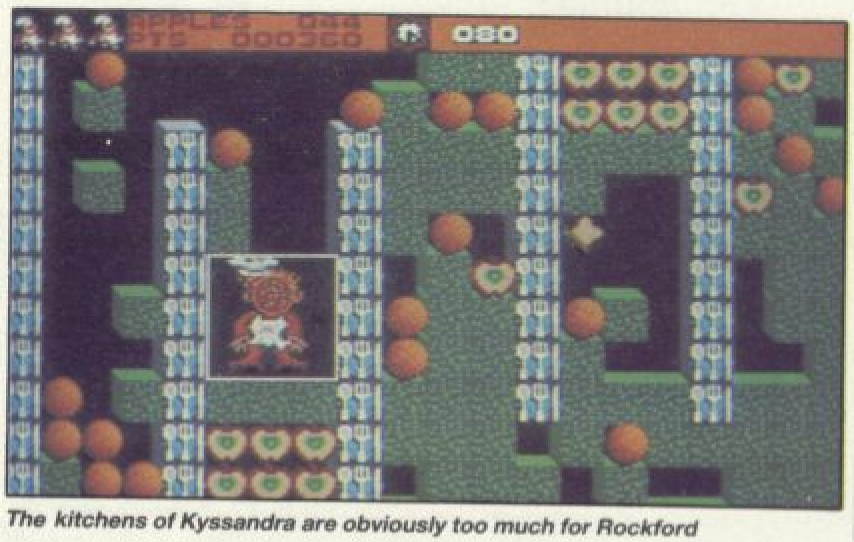
VERSION UPDATE

ROCKFORD—THE ARCADE GAME
Melbourne House

Amiga: £19.99

TWO months after conversions for the ST and PC (review in TGM**006**), *Rockford* is here for the Amiga. Retaining the much-copied basics of the *Boulderdash* game, Rockford scurries around collecting objects, avoiding enemies and manipulating various magical items. The arcade game has Rockford exchanging his distinctly bug-like features for rather more human ones, playing a Hunter, Spaceman and even Dr Frankenstein on the game's five, selectable worlds. Each world is made up of four levels consisting of approximately four screens in size packed with brain-teasing puzzles to be completed within a time limit.

This version has some superb tunes and sound FX, improved graphics with a more subtle use of colour and a new, pseudo-3-D effect – but it is probably best distinguished by the super-smooth scrolling. Nevertheless presentation remains a great deal less than one would expect of an arcade game, while changes to the graphics, in favour of some tacky new ones – such as the cook collecting apples while being chased by hamburger-snakes – have removed much of the original's appeal. Underneath the graphics, however, gameplay is virtually unchanged and is well worth a look if you're not already an addict.



The kitchens of Kyssandra are obviously too much for Rockford

AMIGA: OVERALL 76%



ATARI ST
EXPLORE THE
OF
WHERE TIME STOOD STILL
Your plane has ditched on a mountainous plateau somewhere in deepest Tibet. You and your companions are alive but recovery from the impact is short-lived – a large shape is moving towards you, as it gets closer you rub your eyes in disbelief; a Dinosaur! – where are you...and when? Now you learn to survive in a world untouched by modern life – a world frozen in time. Stunning graphics and startling action in this thrilling innovative game.
ARMY MOVES
You are one of the Elite – a handpicked, crack trooper in battle against a formidable enemy. You'll need all your skill to take advantage of every situation, stamina to keep on going where others would fail and courage to face the ceaseless bombardment by enemy troops, helicopters and artillery and if you survive Army Moves you'll have some great tales to tell!
DINAMIC
AND BEY
HIGHEST
YOU
£19·95 EACH
Ocean Software Limited · 6 Central Street · Manchester · M2 5NS ·

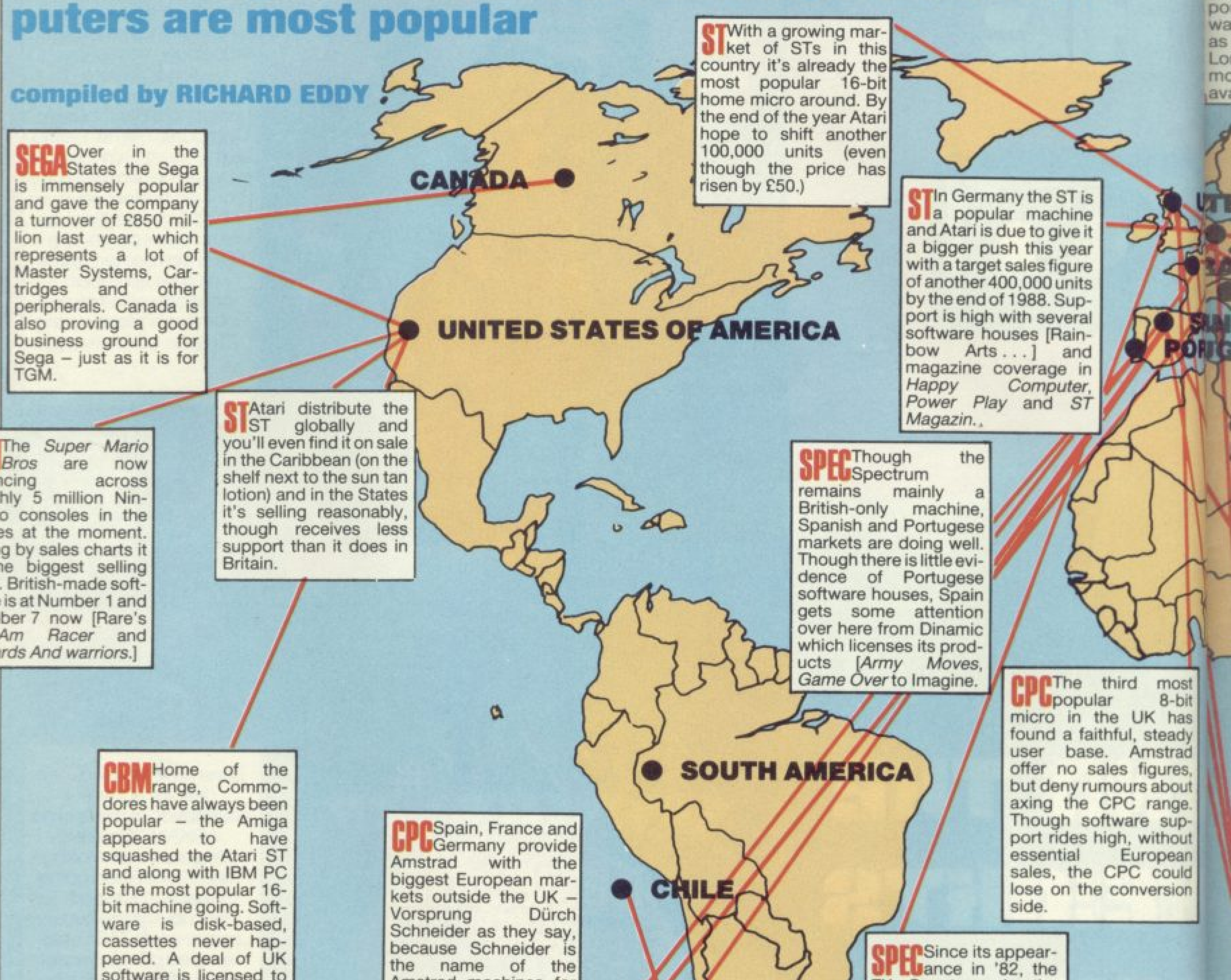


ESE TREASURES
THE
cean
YOND THE
T HEIGHTS
J CAN
PLATOON
The first casualty of war is innocence.
PLATOON THE COMPUTER GAME
1986 Hemdale Film Corporation. All Rights Reserved
The Award winning film by Oliver Stone has been stunningly transcribed to the software entertainment medium creating a Blockbuster Computer Game. Hailed as the "Best Film Tie-in to date" – the program has received brilliant reviews on all formats. Special boxed pack containing a FREE film poster, game picture and audio cassette of Smokey Robinson's classic song "Tracks of my Tears"
ARKANOID
REVENGE OF DOH
TAITO
COIN-OP Licensed from Taito Corp. 1986
Eons have passed... yet despite apparent annihilation in the origina ARKANOID game; Dimension-controlling force "DOH" has come back to life, and occupying the huge space-craft ZARG, has entered our Universe. ARKANOID type space-fighter MIXTEC runs through long forgotten computer data until it finds the answer to this threat... "VAUS 2" is launched and speeds towards the threatening alien presence, before it can extract its revenge... "The Revenge of Doh"
...the name of the game
S · Telephone: 061 832 6633 · Telex: 669977 OCEANS G · Fax: 061 834 0650

COMPUTERS

Pack your suitcases we're off on a whistlestop tour around the globe to see where the major home computers are most popular

compiled by RICHARD EDDY



SEGA Over in the States the Sega is immensely popular and gave the company a turnover of £850 million last year, which represents a lot of Master Systems, Cartridges and other peripherals. Canada is also proving a good business ground for Sega – just as it is for TGM.

NIN The *Super Mario Bros* are now bouncing across roughly 5 million Nintendo consoles in the States at the moment. Going by sales charts it is the biggest selling 'toy'. British-made software is at Number 1 and Number 7 now [Rare's *Pro-Am Racer* and *Wizards And warriors*.]

ST With a growing market of STs in this country it's already the most popular 16-bit home micro around. By the end of the year Atari hope to shift another 100,000 units (even though the price has risen by £50.)

ST Atari distribute the ST globally and you'll even find it on sale in the Caribbean (on the shelf next to the sun tan lotion) and in the States it's selling reasonably, though receives less support than it does in Britain.

ST In Germany the ST is a popular machine and Atari is due to give it a bigger push this year with a target sales figure of another 400,000 units by the end of 1988. Support is high with several software houses [Rainbow Arts . . .] and magazine coverage in *Happy Computer*, *Power Play* and *ST Magazin*.,

SPEC Though the Spectrum remains mainly a British-only machine, Spanish and Portugese markets are doing well. Though there is little evidence of Portugese software houses, Spain gets some attention over here from Dinamic which licenses its products [*Army Moves*, *Game Over* to Imagine.

CBM Home of the range, Commodores have always been popular – the Amiga appears to have squashed the Atari ST and along with IBM PC is the most popular 16-bit machine going. Software is disk-based, cassettes never happened. A deal of UK software is licensed to major US publishers; recently *Thing Bounces Back* (Gremlin Graphics), dubbed *Coil Cop* and Prism's *Arac* (US title: *Spiderbot*) went to EPYX.

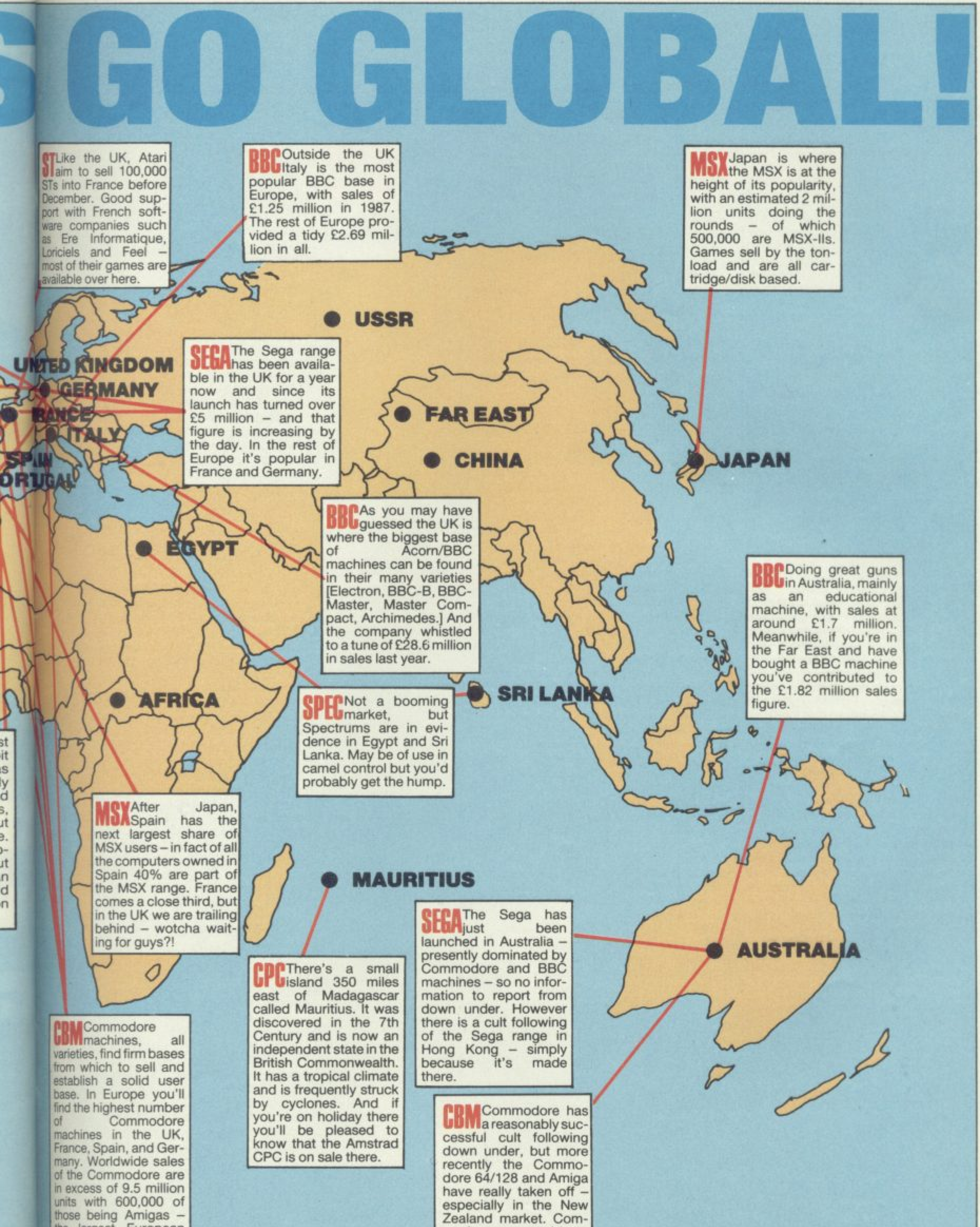
CPC Spain, France and Germany provide Amstrad with the biggest European markets outside the UK – Vorsprung Dürch Schneider as they say, because Schneider is the name of the Amstrad machines for our European chums. Similar support to the ST from software houses such as Ere Informatique [French – *Get Dexter(s)*], Loriciels [French – *Super Ski*], Rainbow Arts [German – *Bad Cat, Great Giana Sisters*] and Dinamic [Spain – *Army Moves, Game Over*.]

CPC The third most popular 8-bit micro in the UK has found a faithful, steady user base. Amstrad offer no sales figures, but deny rumours about axing the CPC range. Though software support rides high, without essential European sales, the CPC could lose on the conversion side.

SPEC Since its appearance in '82, the ZX Spectrum is the most popular 8-bit home micro in the UK. Amstrad remain coy about current sales figures for the +2 and +3, but they have topped the million mark. A good sale of +3 disk software is reckoned to be about 1000-plus units.

CPC Because of global distribution the Amstrad CPC, in its many guises, is found in some odd places – and Chile is a very odd place indeed. Nearer to home, they are also found in Poland and Gibralta.

S GO GLOBAL!



ST Like the UK, Atari aim to sell 100,000 STs into France before December. Good support with French software companies such as Ere Informatique, Loriciels and Feel – most of their games are available over here.

BBC Outside the UK Italy is the most popular BBC base in Europe, with sales of £1.25 million in 1987. The rest of Europe provided a tidy £2.69 million in all.

MSX Japan is where the MSX is at the height of its popularity, with an estimated 2 million units doing the rounds – of which 500,000 are MSX-IIs. Games sell by the ton-load and are all cartridge/disk based.

SEGA The Sega range has been available in the UK for a year now and since its launch has turned over £5 million – and that figure is increasing by the day. In the rest of Europe it's popular in France and Germany.

BBC As you may have guessed the UK is where the biggest base of Acorn/BBC machines can be found in their many varieties [Electron, BBC-B, BBC-Master, Master Compact, Archimedes.] And the company whistled to a tune of £28.6 million in sales last year.

BBC Doing great guns in Australia, mainly as an educational machine, with sales at around £1.7 million. Meanwhile, if you're in the Far East and have bought a BBC machine you've contributed to the £1.82 million sales figure.

SPEC Not a booming market, but Spectrums are in evidence in Egypt and Sri Lanka. May be of use in camel control but you'd probably get the hump.

MSX After Japan, Spain has the next largest share of MSX users – in fact of all the computers owned in Spain 40% are part of the MSX range. France comes a close third, but in the UK we are trailing behind – wotcha waiting for guys?!

SEGA The Sega has just been launched in Australia – presently dominated by Commodore and BBC machines – so no information to report from down under. However there is a cult following of the Sega range in Hong Kong – simply because it's made there.

CPC There's a small island 350 miles east of Madagascar called Mauritius. It was discovered in the 7th Century and is now an independent state in the British Commonwealth. It has a tropical climate and is frequently struck by cyclones. And if you're on holiday there you'll be pleased to know that the Amstrad CPC is on sale there.

CBM Commodore machines, all varieties, find firm bases from which to sell and establish a solid user base. In Europe you'll find the highest number of Commodore machines in the UK, France, Spain, and Germany. Worldwide sales of the Commodore are in excess of 9.5 million units with 600,000 of those being Amigas – the largest European Amiga market is Germany. Meanwhile, here in the UK Amiga sales are approximately 40,000 units.

CBM Commodore has a reasonably successful cult following down under, but more recently the Commodore 64/128 and Amiga have really taken off – especially in the New Zealand market. Commodore was unable to provide any figures but said, modestly, that they were 'pleased'. Most software is imported and has a very high price point.

TOUR OF THE UNIVERSE

It's the biggest, most extravagant computer game in the world, up to 45 can play at one time and it takes you beyond the Moon to Jupiter. Marshal M Rosenthal reports on the latest Shuttle flight from Canada . . .

The CN Tower in Toronto, Canada, is the largest free-standing structure in the world. You look up at it and say, 'So what, big deal, who cares?' But there's more to this needle in the sky than meets the eye. Inside are the usual everyday shops and restaurants, with one exception: Tour Of The Universe. Instead of buying lunch, how's about flying to the stars?

Purchasing a ticket to visit Jupiter seems a bargain – only $10.95! The **Startour Ident** is plastic, with holographic writings that seem to pop off the surface. There is also a magnetic strip which has been encoded with my name (talk about Big Brother.) The attendant places the ticket in a plastic sleeve and loops it around my neck.

I am then allowed to enter the Transition elevator along with a number of fellow passengers. The domed lights dim with each shake as we begin our 1500-foot descent below the surface. An invisible hand seems to give me a gentle push on the head as the elevator groans to a stop, and the doors open onto the year 2019.

A guard clad in black and silver greets us as we queue up before the turnstile of **Security Scan**. A digital voice instructs me to insert my ticket into the glowing slot. An overhead light then comes on as the voice states that my height and weight are now being recorded. Additionally, my psycho-spiritual state is also being viewed. A monitor glows, displaying my face swathed in a myriad of pastel colours. The voice returns and informs me that I may pass into the main concourse. The holding bar swings away and I walk through.

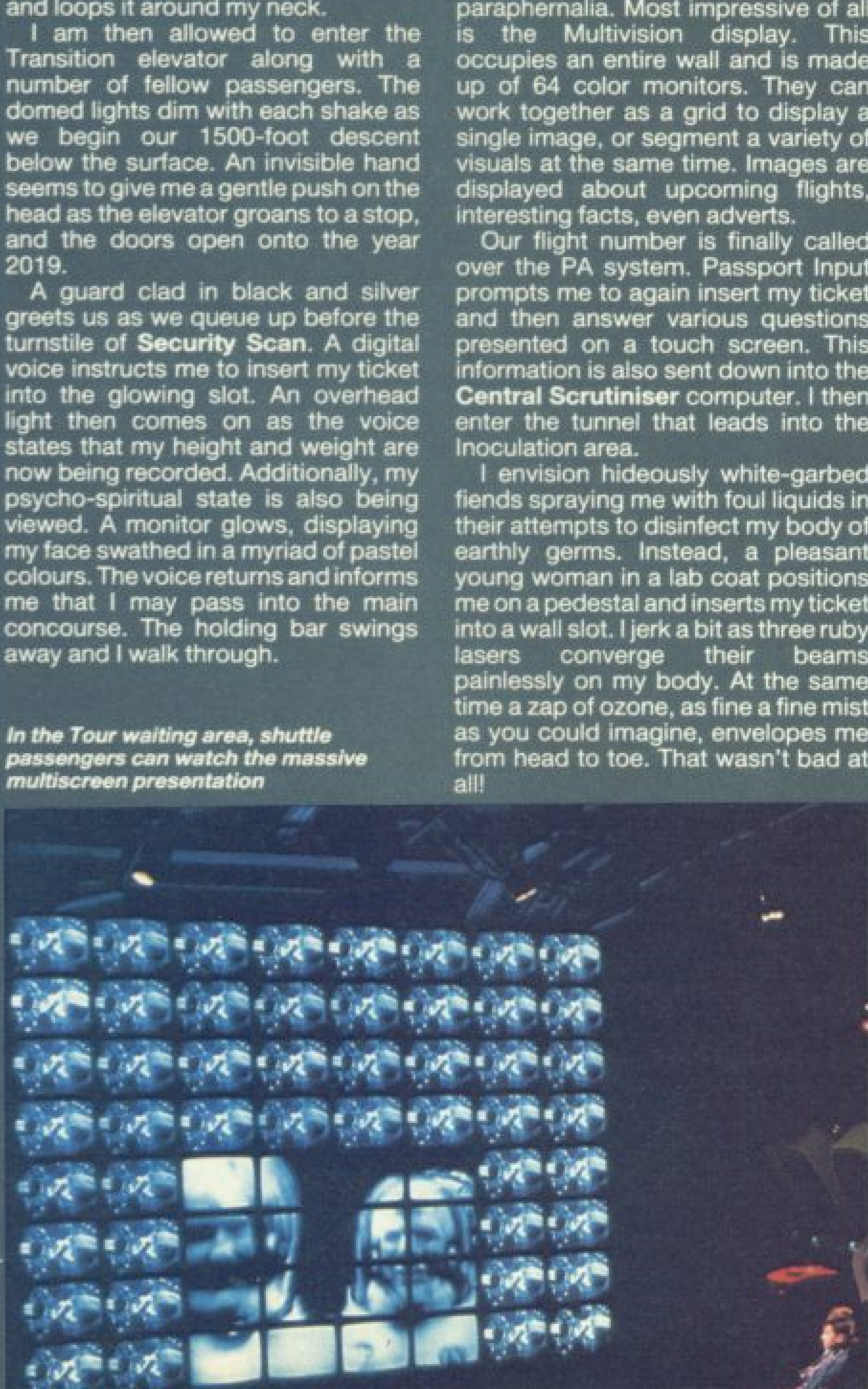
THE OZONE ZAP

Airports have come a long way since my time. There are a variety of exhibits that include, among others, Milestones in the Conquest of Space. There are also displays of computers, strange devices from other galaxies, as well as a hodgepodge of space paraphernalia. Most impressive of all is the Multivision display. This occupies an entire wall and is made up of 64 color monitors. They can work together as a grid to display a single image, or segment a variety of visuals at the same time. Images are displayed about upcoming flights, interesting facts, even adverts.

Our flight number is finally called over the PA system. Passport Input prompts me to again insert my ticket and then answer various questions presented on a touch screen. This information is also sent down into the **Central Scrutiniser** computer. I then enter the tunnel that leads into the Inoculation area.

I envision hideously white-garbed fiends spraying me with foul liquids in their attempts to disinfect my body of earthly germs. Instead, a pleasant young woman in a lab coat positions me on a pedestal and inserts my ticket into a wall slot. I jerk a bit as three ruby lasers converge their beams painlessly on my body. At the same time a zap of ozone, as fine a fine mist as you could imagine, envelopes me from head to toe. That wasn't bad at all!

In the Tour waiting area, shuttle passengers can watch the massive multiscreen presentation



. . . when you're power diving towards the Earth, your stomach doesn't think it's just a movie.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, Cyborgs and Clones, we are about to launch, on our way to visit the planet Jupiter."

I walk down the gangway and give another attendant my ticket. He inserts it into a computer, and shortly hands me a paper document containing all of the information about me since I first signed up for the flight. The document also contains my offworld passport, earthport disembarkation card and visa to Jupiter. I thank him and sit down to await boarding (some things *never* change.)

GATEWAY TO THE STARS

It's time. The airlock doors open with a hydraulic burst of power, and we walk through a darkened corridor and onto the shuttle. I sit down in a heavily padded and cushioned flight seat and fasten my seat harness. An attendant checks for any kind of problem and, seeing none, leaves. The shuttle doors rush together with a loud 'thunk'. Escape hatchways are within easy sight, but let's hope they won't be needed. Multilit instrument panels and control devices go about their duties mysteriously as we fidget in our seats.

Two video monitors, one at either edge of the closed front viewscreen, come to life. A representative for CP Air Interplanetary welcomes us aboard. A moment later, the Captain switches into the monitor and introduces himself: 'Ladies and Gentlemen, Cyborgs and Clones, we are about to launch, on our way to visit the planet Jupiter. You are flying on the new Hermes Class IV MBC Shuttle, which is fully equipped for deep space flight. It also has the revolutionary Helix catapult mechanism – more about that later. Takeoff will be accomplished through the use of magnetic linear attraction, and we hope you enjoy your flight.'

The monitors switch to outside cameras as the protective covering over the front viewscreen rolls back. We now see the inside of the shuttle launch bay, and there is a lurch as our craft begins to move into position for takeoff. During this short process, we can see various other shuttles awaiting their turn, as well as the huge cavern that houses them.

Our position is secured, and we tilt upward towards the open bay doors. A second later we're rising with a 'swoosh' akin to a supersonic soap bubble as we flash through the stratosphere and into a flawless earth orbit. Ahead of us, the stars twinkle an shine as thrusters fire to take us to **Gateway**, the first manned city in space. Gateway looms ahead of us, spinning gracefully as it maintains it position relative to the earth.

Our craft is hailed by **Gateway Control**, and we slow to position inside of the Catapult. The Captain comes on to tell us that we will soon be using the Helix's faster-than-light, nearly instantaneous technique to transport us to Jupiter.

JUPITER MISSION

The Go signal is given and we pick up speed. The framework of spiral plates blur around us and seem to change into a crazed kaleidoscope of rippling

water. Like a roller coaster going down, we move faster and faster. Suddenly, amidst a rush of white noise, the universe blanks out – and majestic Jupiter blossoms on the horizon.

Our shuttle passes over the landscape from miles up, as we gaze down into the awesome red spectacle of the planet. We move off and skim amidst Callisto, Io and other Jovian moons.

The return trip is uneventful. We leave normal space and appear at Gateway. Our Captain comes on the intercom and points out landmarks as we are drawn back into the earth's atmosphere, and towards the CN Tower. Landing once again, the shuttle is returned to the staging area and we disembark.

Leaving the craft, we pass by a series of huge 3x5-foot holograms extolling the virtues of science and technology.

But what would any spaceport be without a gift shop? The corridor exits into a glittering and exciting world of scientific gifts and gadgets. Not to mention an avalanche of souvenirs. Managing to escape with a few dollars left, I enter another transition elevator which returns me to 1988.

SOUND OF SPACE

WARNING: Read no further if you don't wish to have your fantasies shattered by the cold truth of hi-tech. As you might have guessed, the shuttle trip was not real, but a highly accurate and absorbing simulation that took four years and $10 million to create.

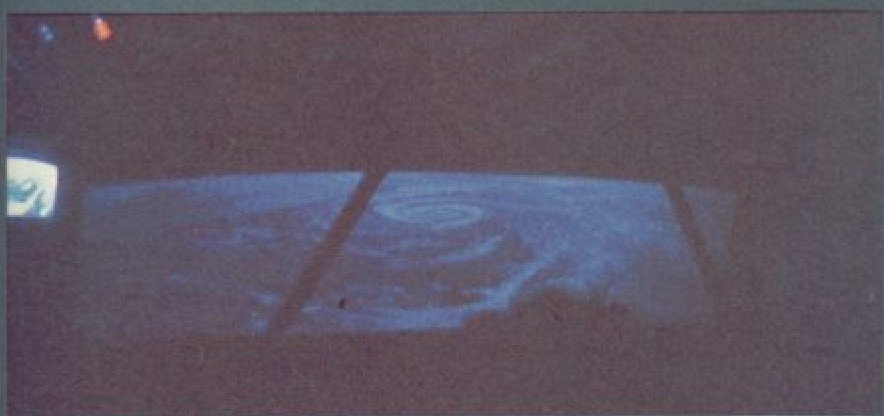
Showscan is the system that creates the illusion of space travel. It was developed by **Douglas Trumbull**, film director and designer of special effects for such films as *2001: A Space Odyssey*, *Star Wars* and *Close Encounters Of The Third Kind*. A chillingly accurate film of space and space effects is rear-projected onto the shuttle's forward viewing screen at 60 frames a second. This is two and half times faster than normal and looks similar to what the human eye expects as it observes the real world. The 70mm large format is combined with a high level of brightness, and an expanded view which creates the amazing feeling of reality. It's helped by a four-channel digital sound track which emanates from speakers placed strategically around and outside the shuttle. The film images are interlinked by computer with the shuttle itself.

Actually, the shuttle is a motion picture house that flies. Pilots train on sophisticated devices that imitate actual aircraft – simulators.

Simulators act and react just like the aircraft does in flight. the machine rests upon a set of hydraulic lifts which move it in the various ways that the craft it is imitating would be like when up in the air. Computers, of course, control the movements, as well as duplicate the many events which can occur. Flying a simulator is just like the real thing, but you never leave the ground.

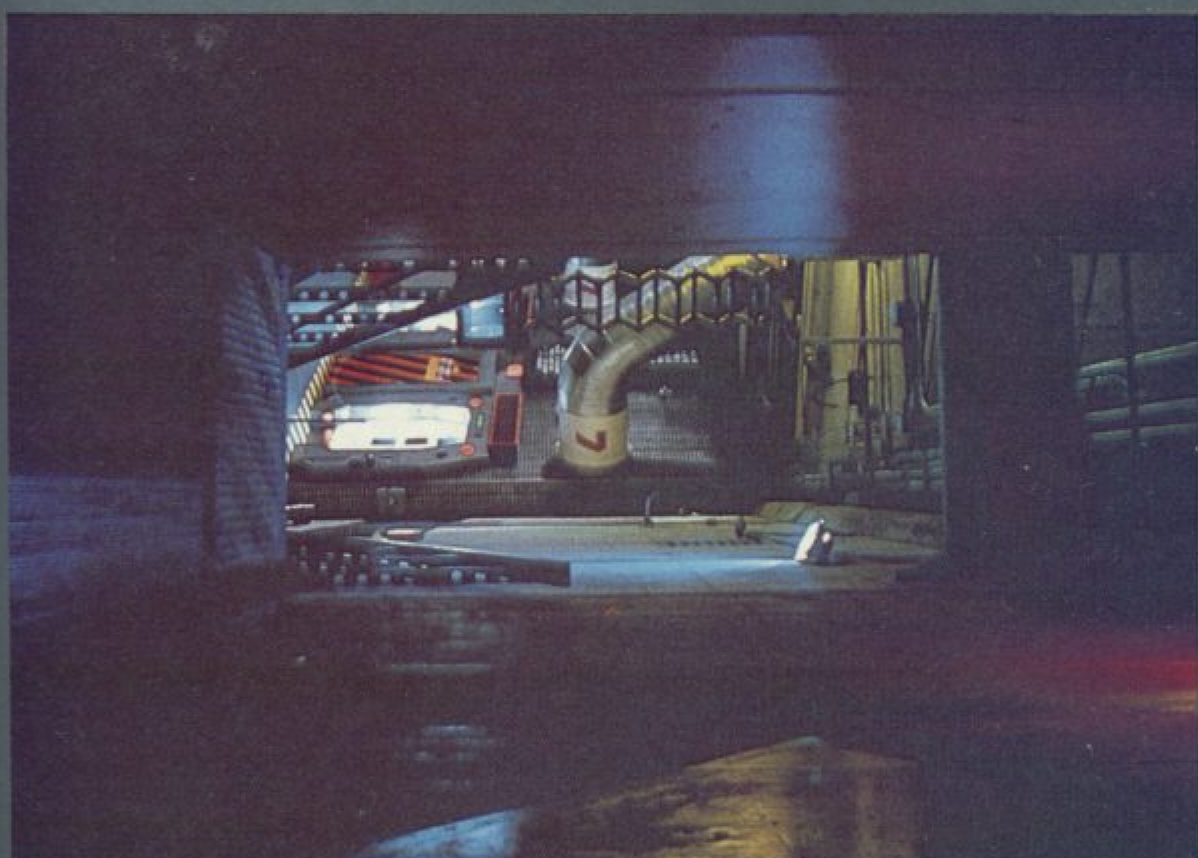


Disinfect the body of earthly germs: three ruby lasers and zap of ozone do the job



I envision hideously white-garbed fiends spraying me with foul liquids to disinfect my body of earthly germs.

Almost like an ordinary airport, the gangway leads down to the shuttle airlock



Tour's simulator is designed by IEI systems and seats 40-45 people. It's been specially adapted to react just like a real space craft. Forward and lateral movements, as well as such things as pitch, roll and yaw, happen in conjunction with the images on-screen. Believe me though, when you're power diving towards the Earth, your stomach doesn't think it's just a movie.

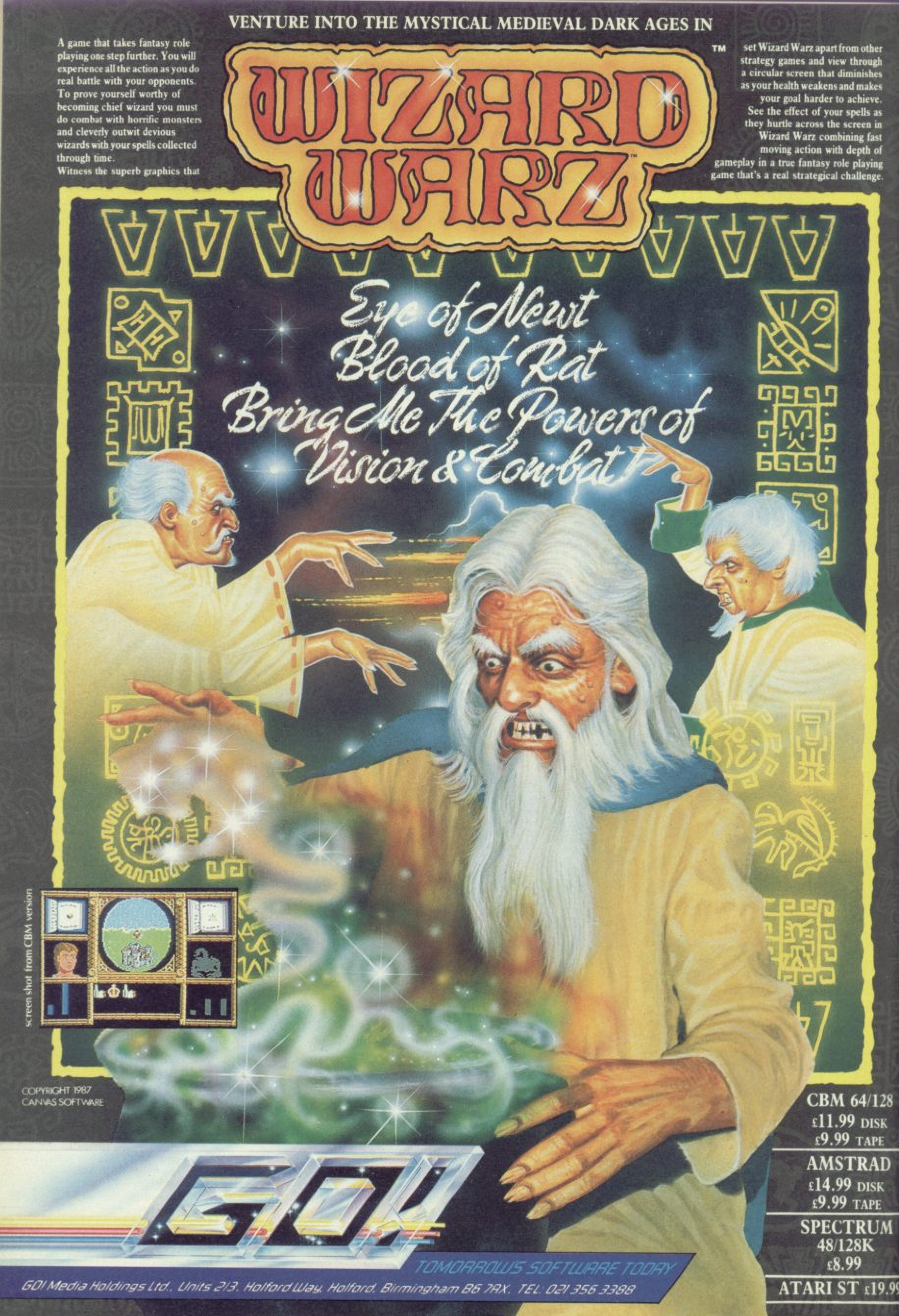
CP Air Interplanetary plans other trips as well, with new planets and galaxies to explore already under development. They've even got another shuttle ready to go when the big offworld tourist season starts!

Some of us get nervous just standing on a tall ladder. But if you want to set your sights high, try Tour Of The Universe.

INTERACTIVE ENTERTAINMENT INC
577 Jarvis Street, Toronto, Ontario Canada M4Y 2J23

TOUR OF THE UNIVERSE RATES
ADULTS $10.95 Canadian
CHILDREN UNDER 12 $4.00 Canadian

When not operating his commercial photography studio in New York, Marshal M Rosenthal is a journalist for a number of domestic and overseas publications dealing in computer, video and high technology.


VENTURE INTO THE MYSTICAL MEDIEVAL DARK AGES IN
WIZARD WARZ™
A game that takes fantasy role playing one step further. You will experience all the action as you do real battle with your opponents. To prove yourself worthy of becoming chief wizard you must do combat with horrific monsters and cleverly outwit devious wizards with your spells collected through time.
Witness the superb graphics that set Wizard Warz apart from other strategy games and view through a circular screen that diminishes as your health weakens and makes your goal harder to achieve. See the effect of your spells as they hurtle across the screen in Wizard Warz combining fast moving action with depth of gameplay in a true fantasy role playing game that's a real strategical challenge.
Eye of Newt
Blood of Rat
Bring Me The Powers of
Vision & Combat!
screen shot from CBM version
COPYRIGHT 1987
CANVAS SOFTWARE
GO!
TOMORROWS SOFTWARE TODAY
GO! Media Holdings Ltd., Units 2/3, Holford Way, Holford, Birmingham B6 7AX. TEL: 021 356 3388
CBM 64/128
£11.99 DISK
£9.99 TAPE
AMSTRAD
£14.99 DISK
£9.99 TAPE
SPECTRUM
48/128K
£8.99
ATARI ST £19.99

GOING OVERBOARD

After a short holiday boardgames are back, and this month we test the qualities of the game of the 'year' – 88 and whip up a sandstorm with Piremid in the land of the ancients. But first, switch your mood to lewd, here's the risqué news

SUMMER [S]EXPLOITS

If you don't possess an open mind at the moment make sure it's unlocked in time for three mid-summer releases not intended for the sensitive. Ardent boardgame producers **Paul Lamond Games** have yet another licensed product to add to their growing range – *Wicked Willie* the board game.

The cheeky six-inch star of many books and T-shirts makes his appearance in a race-round-the-board game in a quest to reach the women's apartment. Helping Willie are the players who collect virility cards to keep up his strength; there are questions to be answered, challenges to overcome and STD clinics to make sure the little lad is pure. However, as Paul Lamond's publicity department informed us, 'It's quite moral really . . . each player has to collect a condom or they can't . . . er, complete the game.' *Wicked Willie* the boardgame goes on general release in late-July.

After playing around with *Wicked Willie* you may become so deranged you will be in need of help, so it's just as well that **MB Games** are releasing ***Therapy*** this summer. *Therapy* is aimed at the adult market and takes players along a humorous journey through life. Dealing with growing pains and examining the human psyche are achieved by answering probing questions. That wacky chappie Kenny Everett is advertising the game on your TV screens soon, stay tuned . . .

If you can make words work the latest offering from **Serif** may be of interest. ***Verbositi*** is the name of the quick-thinking cardgame where players turn over seven randomly picked cards each bearing an initial and have three minutes to concoct sentences on subjects such as sex, halitosis and synchronised swimming. As Serif explain, '*Verbositi* is the new game which encourages outlandish thinking while exposing warped minds.' Well, there are enough warped minds around here at the moment without exposing any more thankyouverymuch.



88 DIGITAL DILEMMA

IPL, around £10, 2-4 players

First exhibited at the Ideal Home Exhibition on stand 2020 – House Of The Future (TGM**007**), *88 Digital Dilemma* was described by Professor Walker of the Royal College Of Art as 'the game of the future'. It's unusual in as much as there is no central playing board – each player has their own.

The *88* box comes complete with four playing boards, number cards and yellow 'digital' chips. The objective is to pick a two-digit number (the objective number) and attempt to recreate it, or numerically as close as possible, on the playing board by moving the chips.

The interesting factor is that the objective number has to be created by performing one of four moves with the digital chips left on the board from a previous round. The four moves are: **jumble** – move chips already on the board but not add or subtract any, **add chips** – add but not move any, **subtract chips** – take away chips but not move any, or **do nothing**. The winner is the first person to create the objective number ten times.

THE VERDICT

Bit of a brain drainer this one and not so good on the amusing entertainment value side. The idea is a clever one and if you're in the mood for tactical thinking it works well. However, for the average games player it may prove repetitive and slow.

PIREMID

Egyptian Enterprises, £24.95, 2-4 players



As with many computer games at the moment, presentation is one of the most important boardgame factors, and *Piremid* is an excellent example, with clearly marked board and 170 playing pieces. It has taken 18 months to design the game involves the journey of four sarcophagi – one per player – through the lands of Egypt. The playing board is in a spiral shape – the objective is to reach the centre and build your pyramid.

Traveling on the roll of a die takes players through a city, a quarry, up the Nile and across the desert. To make the passage safely, talents (money) and slaves (people) need to be accumulated to buy a boat (for the Nile) and sand sledges (desert?). Both slaves and talents can be acquired by trading – for anything players have to trade!

The board is evenly scattered with hazards and pot-luck squares, there are sun squares (good luck), cobra squares (ba-a-a-d luck) and God squares (make bad luck good.) To build a pyramid each player must have five matching building cards and it's a mad race to complete construction.

THE VERDICT

For all *Piremid*'s wonderful playing pieces, the game itself lacks any real playability and energy to keep going through long games. Much of the game is down to luck, leaving little room for tactical playing or devious trading. It's nice, but not that nice . . .

NEW LABELS, OLD LABELS, NEWE COMPANIES

On page 94 we look at the hype in the name; here, John Gilbert examines how the name of the game may be in the change in the name

The software industry is burgeoning under a wealth of strong product, colourful advertising campaigns and high public awareness. It's helped along by a support group of magazines such as THE GAMES MACHINE and television programs which directly or indirectly use computer graphics and arcade games.

It is a market which is beholden to the big companies such as Ocean and US Gold, and where money and contacts are important if you want to succeed. Fortunately, though, the market pool hasn't stagnated. Big companies are capable of coming up with new labels and concepts to give the industry a fresh face despite the lack of any new blood, or companies, on the scene.

Until recently the 'new label' has been the province of record and budget software industries. Look behind such gems as Music For Pleasure, Melbourne House and the old Activision (itself renamed Mediagenic . . .) and you will find biggies such as Thorn, EMI, and Mastertronic. New labels, new titles, even new managements . . .

GO! FORTH AND MULTIPLY

There are three main reasons why a major software publisher would want to diversify operations into another label. First is financial: most labels are Limited companies in their own right, should they fail, the directors of the master company are not liable to creditors, though, as preferential creditors of their own subsidiary, any resulting money from the failure can be paid back to the main firm.

Second: a publisher involved in arcade games may decide to get into adventures but doesn't want to be linked to those products by its arcade fans. Also, companies such as US Gold have differing product ranges which will have differently advertised images. US Gold used solely to ship software from the States, but now does a lot of game conversion work in Britain. It's GO! label got back to the American image with games mainly for the 16-bit market. For them the new label, totally divorced from the parent company, was the answer . . . now even that has changed, current thinking suggests it would be better to promote identities such as Rainbow Arts rather than the GO! image so directly. Names come, names go . . .

Third is image protection, used by many high-ranking companies: originally they either regarded computer games as a frivolous – though profitable – sideline or who already had a booming industrial software business putting out databases, communications packages or word processors. One such national concern was British Telecom which first regarded games publishing as an interesting prospect but didn't want it connected to the BT image.

OUT OF THE FRYING PAN

Firebird, the budget label, was the first-born, shortly followed by parent company Telecomsoft and finally the Rainbird adventure imprint. Both imprints have boomed while managing to keep their identities separate.

Since its formation, however, Firebird has undergone a transformation which has just been rationalised by publisher Paul Hibbard. It started to put out full-price games such as *Elite* and *Bubble Bobble*, introduced a Firebird Budget at a mid-price point and created Firebird Silver to take on the low, £1.99 range.

Confused? Well, the publishers at Telecomsoft thought you might be and have just put the finishing touches to a new image – labelled Silverbird.

They say the reason for the reformation was not solely a matter of pricepoint indentification with a particular label – ie Firebird Silver at £1.99 – but, rather, that the Firebird label was in danger of losing its brand identity.

To make sure that no confusion occurs the Fire- and Silverbird logos take up most of the newly designed cassette cover formats and a colour coding system is used to show what sort of games are on offer. Silverbird products, with titles such as *Beach Buggy Simulator*, *Stunt Bike Simulator*, *Egg Head*, *Skateboard Kids* and *The European Football Championships* will retail at £1.99.

The general standard of the Silverbird games is as high as you will find in any budget range. *Egghead*, for instance, is a colourful platforms-and-ladders game in which you become a motherless egg which needs to hatch. You must keep warm artificially, using items, such as an infra-red heater, which can be found on a trip around your world. Transport's provided by means of teleport or swappers – which don't guarantee destinations, while chargers, ULA chips, a helmet, parachute and rocket might help you – or not.

Similarly, *Oh No!* – at the higher price of £2.99 – puts you down in the latter part of Earth's history where a great deal of cowjacking goes on. The cows are protected by transparent spheres but, ultimately, it's up to you in your cattle rangers' craft, to stop rustlers nicking your herd.

Further up the straight budget-price scale, Silverbird is doing things with the Atari ST. *I, Ball*, priced at £9.95 is the 16-bit conversion of the hit game involving the rescue of your spherical pals from the grips of the evil Terry Ball. Struggling through 16 security-conscious zones, there's only a bubble gun for comfort, and as you pass each zone you gain a set of super devices, such as turbo boost, a horizontal laser, a Rainbow ripple laser and a laser cooling unit.

Firebird, meanwhile will continue its £4.99 mid-price budget range products with games *Earth Light* (reviewed this issue) and *Virus*, out in June. According to Firebird, the quality of mid-price range will be markedly better than the low-price and could be equated with full-priced games.

SPECIAL EFFECTS

Ocean, biggest of the software industry's deep sea fish, also launched a label, though its founders are outside rather than inside the parent company. **Special FX**, formed by former Ocean man Paul Finnegan,operates out of the Victoria Docks industrial complex on a series of 16-bit games which Ocean markets.

The first SFX project was the successful arcade game *Firefly*. Its bright packaging ensured that,



"a publisher involved in arcade games may get into adventures but doesn't want to be linked to those products by its arcade fans."

although the name Ocean was emblazoned on the cassette insert, the new company's name hit public awareness and prepared the way for its latest release *Gutz* (TGM**006**, Spectrum update this issue.)

When you take *Gŭtz* apart you can see the effect the masters of the new



label hope it will have on you. The bright, perhaps lurid, cover illustration has the best American feel to it. Even the blurb on the back provides a subliminal link with US films, in particular a graphic link with the 'Nightmare' of *Nightmare On Elm Street* – I hope there's no trademark clash with the film guys!

And on to the game which has a graphics style almost movie-like in quality and as outrageous a plotline as we've come to expect from US companies which sell through UK outlets, such as US Gold. These guys want their label to have the glamour of the film world and connections with the US. Even the story of *Gutz*'s development reeks of Hollywood. The original idea for the game came from Andy Rixon, Special FX's graphic artist. According to Ocean, he recently underwent an exploratory barium meal examination which produced some colourful pics of his guts. Once out of hospital he discussed his highly original, if now downright disgusting, idea with Paul Finnegan and the rest of the crew. The result we already know, the player intestinally trapped inside a spacebound super alien with a battle against a pair deadly dentures at the game's end.

Special FX intends maintaining title originality and wants to trade under its own name eventually, but until then is more than happy with the Ocean association. The company started with just four members of staff but now stands at 12. It's about to do another publishing deal with Ocean, but in the meantime is working away at its next title, *Vertigo*. The game is a futuristic, hyperdrive, version of *Top Gun* in which you take the part of a rookie pilot. This simulator, however – located in an underground tunnel – is driven by the pilot's mind and is not limited to transport or combat.

Special FX's next marketing move is to go into PC game production, an area booming in the States but which is meeting resistance here.

"Andy Rixon underwent an exploratory barium meal examination which produced some colourful pics of his guts."

EXOCET BLAST

Okay, so Exocet is not the most endearing name for a new software company, but you've got to admit that this spanking new company is holding its own against the big guns in the 16-bit games war.

Exocet's first game, called *Foundations Waste* (reviewed TGM**007**, Atari ST 77%), an instant success, was marketed along similar American lines to that of Special FX: the program – a multilevel arcade game with basic similarities to *Xevious* – is important but so are the maps, security passes and colour information leaflets in the package.

"Special FX want their label to have the glamour of the film world and connections with the US."

Exocet is now well placed to launch its second game which is based somewhat psychedelically on reality and called *Phantasm*. It's a weird game and, like so many movies these days, based on a dream reality. At the start life is a treadmill. The Poll Tax collector is about to bother you, the bills are there on the mat and you're trapped in the mundanity of it all . . . but you can read all about that in the reviews this month!

CHANGING MARKET

The software industry, on first impressions, has changed little since mega-corporations like Ocean and Activision – sorry, Mediagenic – came on the scene. But, there is a marked change in product because, unlike other industries, there is always room for new labels, companies and faces at the top and in the charts.

It's a unique trend in the developing software market that new people can make it to the top so easily, and hopefully it will continue to work that way.

Unfortunately, as industries mature their veins grow taught and it becomes increasingly difficult for newcomers to break into the business. So, if you hanker after starting your own software label, now might well be the best time.



IN OUR SIGHTS

TARGET GAMES reckons to have a new approach to computer strategy games. THE GAMES MACHINE's war expert, Robin Hogg, tests the boast

Do you remember *Chaos* or *Rebel Star Raiders*? As a Spectrum-owning strategy player, you certainly should. They both became cult games, though never receiving the wider recognition they deserved. And they have something in common apart from strategy, the name of **Julian Gollop**, their programmer. It's been a while – over three years – since *Rebel Star Raiders*, but Julian hasn't been idle, and the results of his endeavours can soon be seen, as his new company, **Target Games** joins the software ranks, promoting an entirely new approach to computer strategy.

In earlier times, strategy games were viewed as a minor part of a publisher's releasing policy, and although *Chaos* was marketed by RPG specialists Games Workshop's software arm, the company stopped publishing software shortly after. Earlier still, Red Shift – noted for their single-minded adherence to complex strategy – lacked the marketing clout to promote *Rebel Star Raiders* sufficiently. But the game survived. Julian rewrote it and it surfaced through Firebird at the ridiculously low price of £1.99 under the name of *RebelStar*, and is a far superior game. Firebird also rereleased *Chaos* as a budget game.



Mission One* – The Assassins – *Combat has taken place between two members of the* Laser Squad *(one recently deceased) and two combat droids

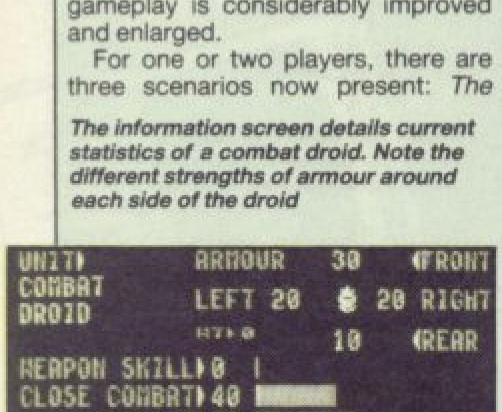
REINFORCEMENTS

The Target Games debut, *Laser Squad* is actually the sequel to *RebelStar*. It follows *RebelStar*'s format in general screen display, but gameplay is considerably improved and enlarged.

For one or two players, there are three scenarios now present: *The Assassins, Moonbase Assault* and *Rescue From The Mines* are the tentative titles. Each promises a different challenge, while retaining the key strategy elements that made *RebelStar* such a success. Software support for *Laser Squad* will continue after release with further scenario data files. This is a long-overdue extra; *Rebel Star Raiders* offered an expansion facility but expansion files were never released. Julian hasn't finally decided yet, but it looks likely that several skill levels will be provided too.

In play, *RebelStar* veterans will feel at home. With a cursor, the entire map may be scanned and routes to targets planned and tactics determined. There's also a scanner to display a strategic map of the entire playing area.

The information screen details current statistics of a combat droid. Note the different strengths of armour around each side of the droid



"Suspense and tension and the uncertainty of close-quarters combat have been recreated perfectly."

HIDE AND SEEK

Something omitted from *RebelStar* was the option for hidden movement which lead to problems: players simply moved the cursor around the playing area, noted positions of attacking troopers and defending robots and effected a game-winning strategy. Rectified in *Laser Squad*, the line of sight rule is now employed. A character may have a perfect view up a corridor ahead, but an enemy robot could sneak up behind and not spotted until it's too late! Suspense and tension results, and the uncertainty of close-quarters-combat has been recreated perfectly.

And there are *more* extras. At the start, each player is given a number of points with which weapons, equipment and armour can be purchased, giving much more flexibility in creating game strategies and tactics than *RebelStar* with its fixed set of weapons per trooper. Weapons don't just fire and hit or miss their targets, the more potent ammunition explodes, destroying not only the target but nearby objects too. Fuel tanks explode if hit, grenades can be set to explode immediately or timed to blow up on a later turn.

Ranged combat includes normal methods of aimed shots and opportunity shots, but also snap shots and automatic fire, the latter results in a spray of fire over a player-defined area; handy for providing suppressive or covering fire.

Each character has their own statistics, much more than the basic stats of characters in *RebelStar*. Morale, agility, strength, armour, weapon skills and unarmed combat skills all play a part in the conflicts.

At the time of writing, *Laser Squad* is in a playable state, but the computer opponents have yet to receive artificial intelligence, ranged combat is also not present in the preview version. These and other features are being coded even now and *Laser Squad* is on target for an August 1 release on Spectrum and October 3 for Commodore 64/128. The game looks set to be a winner. This is classic strategy, very user-friendly in operation and looks likely to be powerful in play. Target Games have hit the bullseye with the first program.

WIZARD WARS

Looking ahead, Target Games plans to release *Lords Of Chaos*, a game of magical combat bearing a passing resemblance to *Chaos*.

Up to four wizards can play, casting a wide variety of spells at one another in a playing area set over a scrolling map complete with all types of terrain, hazards and the obligatory wandering monsters. The wizards will be 3 x 3 character blocks in size, with at least four frames of animation – quite a departure from the single-character graphics of *Chaos*. Spells will include summoning forth creatures from other planes, ones requiring wizards to perform prior tasks (such as standing in a pentacle or using an artefact.) And potions may be created to use against enemies and the many weird creatures summoned up.

The scrolling map will mean more playing area, more chance for wizards to create personal tactics and, inevitably, stronger strategic gameplay of more depth and scope – points which could be said to constitute Target's new strategic manifesto.



. . . THE POWER . . . THE SPEED . . .
. . . . TO OVERCOME . . . . .
. . . . . . THE UNEXPECTED . . . . .
SPEEDKING
WITH FREE GAME
£11.99
For use with the:
Spectrum 16, 48 and Plus. Commodore 64 and 128. All Atari. Amstrad CPC. MSX.
■ The only joystick that actually fits your hand.
■ Fire button positioned right under your trigger finger.
■ Solid steel shaft and robust construction.
■ 12 month guarantee.
SPEEDKING
WITH AUTOFIRE
£12.99
For use with the:
Spectrum. Plus and Plus 2.* Commodore 64, 128 and VIC 20. All Atari (inc ST) Amiga. MSX.
■ Auto-fire to give instant and even firepower (Autofire only).
■ Micro-switches allow you to not only feel, but hear each move of the stick.
* (Spectrum Plus 2 £14.99)
SEGA®
MASTER SYSTEM
£12.99
■ The only joystick that actually fits your hand.
■ Twin fire buttons positioned right under your trigger finger.
■ Solid steel shaft and robust construction.
■ 12 month guarantee.
NINTENDO®
ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM
£12.99
■ Auto-fire to give instant and even firepower.
■ Start and select buttons (Nintendo only).
■ Micro-switches allow you to not only feel, but hear each move of the stick.
When you're pitting your wits against unknown foes you'll need to react fast. And with enough firepower to survive. Every single time.
The Speedking puts that much power at your fingertips.
High performance that gives you the power over the unexpected.
KONIX
PRODUCTS LIMITED
The fastest reactions in the business
Trade or export enquiries welcome on 0495 350101.
To: Konix Products Limited, Unit 35, Rassau Industrial Estate, Ebbw Vale, Gwent NP3 5SD. U.K.
Please send me ____ Speedkings with Game at £11.99 ea. ____
____ Speedkings with Autofire at £12.99 ea. ____
____ Spectrum Plus 2 Speedkings with Autofire at £14.99 ea. ____
____ Segas at £12.99 ea. ____
____ Nintendos at £12.99 ea. ____
(Prices include P&P). I enclose Cheque/Postal Order for ____
Made payable to KONIX. Or charge my Access/Visa
No. ____ Signed ____
Name (Block Capitals) ____
Address ____
____ Postcode ____
Allow 14 days for delivery ☎ Credit card holders may call on 0495 350101.

HYPE'S A NAM

Naming the game's the name of the game but, as Barnaby Page discovers, a company's naming game can put you in oddly-named company . . .

Sock Shop put a stop to it, but if you go to an old-fashioned hosier you'll find socks with names like Indestructible and Immaculate, names from the days when the British Empire was still on its feet. Socks: strong, clean.

But you wouldn't expect to find a City sandwich bar called Indomitable – no, they've got delicate cute names (Doobries, Munchkins, Sam Widges spring to mind) because they sell delicate cute corner-fillers.

Bus lines and airlines are grand, geographical, global: United Counties, Continental. Horses can be ironic – Don't Be Late – or sweeping: Burrough Hill Lad fuses power and wildness (high, windy Burrough Hill) and youth.

But to the outside sock-wearing sandwich-eating bus-riding bet-laying world, the most distinctive thing about computer names is the fruit connection: Apple, Apricot. And sooner or later Acorn and Oak confirm suspicions that you're nearer hardware clichés in a garden than anywhere else on earth. One publishing company, planning a new machine-specific magazine, has jokingly given it the working title of *Your Potato'*. . .

Yet the names of the games machines tell a different story. Whereas Apple and the rest of the orchard were originally so dubbed to convince unautomated offices how very nice and natural computers are really, many of the early home machines – take Commodore, Spectrum, Enterprise, Jupiter Ace – were selling themselves not on pastoral user-friendliness but on stirring adventurous tags, boldly going where no teen had gone before.

Apple and the rest of the orchard were originally so dubbed to convince unautomated offices how very natural computers are . . .

The next generation of machine names shows how international the industry has become: Amiga, Atari ST, Sega, Nintendo are all pronounceable in most European and some oriental languages, whereas Spectrum would be an impossibly foreign-sounding word to a French- or Italian-speaker (and indeed it's hardly sold outside Britain . . .).

International impact is important. Arete, which sells its workstations (high power terminals) all over Europe, recently changed its name to Arix – because Arete sounds too much like the French for 'stop'!

When German company Schneider announced in March it would start selling its low-cost PC clones in Britain, directly rivalling Amstrad, one response from the British firm was: 'They'll have a difficult time on their hands. Whilst most people might be able to pronounce Schneider, few will be able to spell it.'

Amstrad, which stands for Alan Michael Sugar Trading, is functional and phonetic (that is, it's written exactly as it sounds; you could hardly misspell it) – a bit like its glitzless, bargain-basement machines.

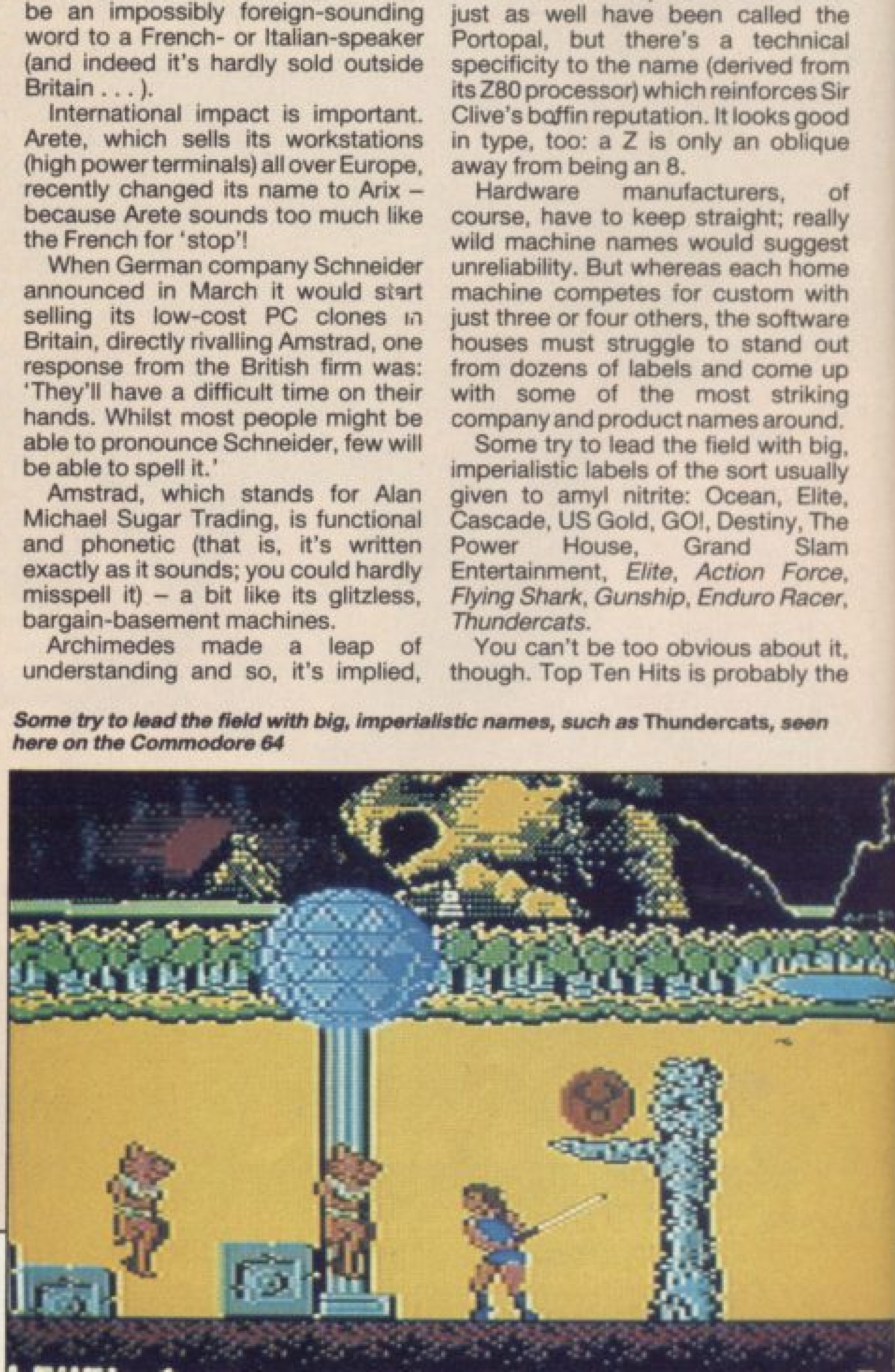
Archimedes made a leap of understanding and so, it's implied, can we with Acorn's 32-bit machine; Sir Clive Sinclair's portable Z88 could just as well have been called the Portopal, but there's a technical specificity to the name (derived from its Z80 processor) which reinforces Sir Clive's boffin reputation. It looks good in type, too: a Z is only an oblique away from being an 8.

Hardware manufacturers, of course, have to keep straight; really wild machine names would suggest unreliability. But whereas each home machine competes for custom with just three or four others, the software houses must struggle to stand out from dozens of labels and come up with some of the most striking company and product names around.

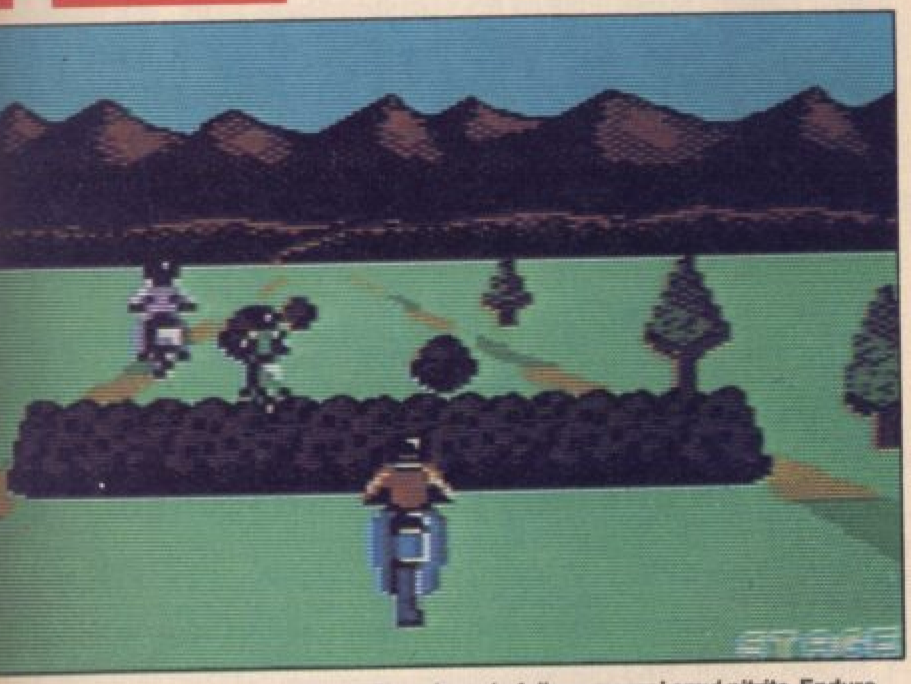
Some try to lead the field with big, imperialistic labels of the sort usually given to amyl nitrite: Ocean, Elite, Cascade, US Gold, GO!, Destiny, The Power House, Grand Slam Entertainment, *Elite*, *Action Force*, *Flying Shark*, *Gunship*, *Enduro Racer*, *Thundercats*.

You can't be too obvious about it, though. Top Ten Hits is probably the

Some try to lead the field with big, imperialistic names, such as Thundercats, *seen here on the Commodore 64*



S IN
ME



Other popular names sound more like a brand of disco-goers' amyl nitrite, **Enduro Racer** *for instance – Commodore 64*

worst software house name around because it's so transparent, and Code Masters comes a close second. The two 8-bit budget houses might as well be called Very Good Games . . .

Others go for high-tech suggestivity: Softek, Digital Integration (it means nothing but sounds like a powerful programming technique), Thalamus (it's part of the brain), *Psytraxx*, *F-15 Strike Eagle*, *Apollo 18*.

Martech almost falls into that category, but it's also taken from the name of founder David Martin – just as Domark combines bosses Dominic Wheatley and Mark Strachan and Tynesoft refers to the company's Newcastle base.

American houses, catering to an older market than British software producers, think of themselves as equivalent to book publishers or film producers and try to show it in their names: Electronic Arts and MicroProse, for instance, reconcile technical sophistication (electronic, micro) and creativity (arts, prose). Electric Dreams and the add-on manufacturer Romantic Robot do the same.

Some software houses try to get as far away from the techie image of home computing as they can, with cute names like Llamasoft, Bug-Byte, M.A.D. (one of the few acronyms) and Gremlin Graphics.

Many try to strike an atavistic, primitivist chord with ritualistic-sounding names like the new Mandarin and Telecomsoft's Firebird and Rainbird – though the latter was originally to be called Bluebird, and was renamed after boss Tony Rainbird when it was found Bluebird already existed. Blue packaging remains a Rainbird feature.

Others hope for the same effect by going all elvy and goblinny with pseudo-Celtic game names like *Tir Na Nog* and *Dun Darach* or the medieval mystery of *Black Lamp*, *Shadowgate* and *Warlock* – or try to conjure up the mysterious East with *Uchi Mata* and suchilike.

Equally embarrassing to say out loud are today's short, meaningless vaguely futuristic titles: *Traz*, *POD*, *Zolyx*, *Xarax*.

More intelligently, puns have always been popular in game names – *Hydrofool*, *Frost Byte* – and self-mockery is back in vogue.

In 1984 we had *Meta-Galactic Llamas Battle At The Edge Of Time* poking fun at the cosmic struggles and sentient animals which feature in so many games.

And recently budget house Alternative announced *BMX Ninja*, a dig at Code Masters's habit of throwing together selling words such as BMX, super, professional, plus, and simulator. (By its own admission, Code Masters counts on 'simulator' stimulating sales.)

But Firebird was quick off the mark to outdo Alternative with *Ninja Scooter Simulator* . . .

Originality isn't all. Alternative itself chose its name because the word comes up so often in conversation, and IBM made a similar marketing masterstroke around 1980 when it chose a generic term, 'personal computer', for its PC range. After all, you can hardly avoid saying 'PC' if you're talking about personal computers, whereas IBM's usually extremely boring product names like DPPX 370 are unlikely to creep into casual conversation.

IBM also tried the generic-name trick in software with its mainframe relational database *DB2* – so simple it suggests there have only ever been two databases and it's the latest. On the PC (!) front, Ashton-Tate has done the same with its market leader *dBase*, one of many software packages with a CapiTal LettEr in the middle of a word.

Apple Mac software producers are ParticuLarly guilty of that nervous tic of nomenclature, coming up with things like *MacDraw* and *FullWrite Professional* as if they think they're cute; Mac software also has really kind of, wow, conceptual names sometimes, like *HyperCard* and the equally meaningless *MacProject*.

But in businessland, everybody loves an acronym most of all. Among the operating systems there's UNIX and DOS (Microsoft's Bill Gates obviously never learned any British slang!), and less pronounceably there's SQL (Structured Query Language for interrogating databases; said 'sequel') and WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get, meaning the printout is exactly the same as the screen display; pronounced 'wizzywig').

Among the programming languages are BASIC, PASCAL, COBOL – and C, which neatly pokes fun at the acronym activity with a single-letter name (and is appropriately a concise, unreadable language).

Why is it that computer people fancy these names so? Why is it that it's the programmers as often as the marketing men who come up with the wildest game titles? Perhaps it's because they need to use English words again after struggling all day with machine talk like:

```
*ptr++='a';
```

Well, I look for *MacHiavelli* (office administration) and *MacTheknife* (cut'n'paste), PC compatibles called Mango and Banana, *Simulator Simulator* from Code Masters, and a Lotus spreadsheet called *6-7-8* in recognition of the months the latest *1-2-3* version is taking.

Imagine the name of the game . . .

Originality isn't all. Alternative itself chose its name because the word comes up so often in conversation . . .

THE CAMCORDER REVOLUTION

The Integrated Leisure Environment (as THE GAMES MACHINE reported last month) is almost with us, and a vital aspect is the role video has to play. Videos are learning to talk to computers, but to join the conversation, you need a Camcorder; to kick off the dialogue, Mel Croucher offers some suggestions on best-buys in a minefield of electronic alphanumeric suffixes

Video cameras that can play back tapes instantly, through the viewfinder or via a television screen, have been with us for more than five years, and UK sales have increased by a hefty 70% since June 1986. Instant action-replays of holidays, weddings, funerals, sports and Auntie Ethel fishing for her teeth mumbling 'I don't know what to say' are now as common as muck. But with the introduction of wonderful video software packages, the market is changing rapidly. **Electronic Arts** have just released *DeluxeProductions* (TGM**007**) and *DeluxeVideo 1.2*, which gives the home user a moving title option, animated graphics, multiple scene generators, range of wipes, sounds, special effects and even a weather map. If you own an Amiga and have £149 (twice) knocking around, you could be making sophisticated videos at the touch of a few buttons.

The Camcorder of 1988 is more complex and sophisticated than the orbital Sputnik of 1958! 'Sputnik' is Russian for 'travelling companion', which is as good a definition as any for today's combined video/camera-tape-recorder. It's about the same size and weight as that primitive satellite, contains ten times more electronics, and is about one hundred millionth the cost.

We asked our man with the Sugarcubes on his stereo and the icecubes in his brain to come up with a simple diagram of Starship Camcorder (over the page), to help explain a highly complex chunk of hardware. The fact, that cartoonist Robin Evans is clinically insane is proved yet again. Still, that's what comes of knock knock knocking on Evans's door.

STARSHIP CAMCORDER

the on-board components:

1 POWER PACK: rechargeable battery cells provide anything up to one hour's portable location use. Low-battery warning lights are normally displayed through viewfinder and/ or on the operating panel. Mains power can also be provided by a wired power unit, connected to a voltage adaptor.

2 MICROPHONE: (or 'my crow phone' according to Evans!) The modern Camcorder mic is highly sensitive, and captures live sound onto a puny strip of your video tape in the case of VHS, or across the whole tape width in the case of Video-8. This electronic ear is usually the least sophisticated part of your machine because it is cursed with an Automatic Level Control which searches out any sounds in quiet conditions and amplifies them. Especially annoying is when it picks up the noise of your zoom lens servo and makes it sound like a dying mosquito, although the muttering curses of the wedding photographer are often much more entertaining than the bride's drunken father.

3 LENS SYSTEM: the eye of the camera. An electronic iris automatically adjusts itself to handle lighting conditions which can vary from a brilliant snowscape to a candle-lit bedroom. An infra-red autofocus is often sensed through the lens system, which can be made up of 20 or 30 elements, controlled by microprocessor.

4 ZOOM FOCUS CONTROL: twin electronic servos adjust the lens barrels during automatic recording, and provide the optimum focus of your images while you prat about with enlarging or shrinking your subject. (Observant readers will note that the artist refused to include this component, for reasons of amnesia.)

5 OPTICAL FILTER: the unsung hero of the Camcorder, this little gismo captures all those unwanted specks of disturbing light, and imprisons them in its own black hole. This stops the tones of your moving images getting distorted, but it also means you are sacrificing the finest detail in order to prevent horrible pulsing patterns invading playback.

6 IMAGE SENSOR: this is where it all happens! About half a million microscopic units known as 'silicon photodiodes' are arranged in a pattern which analyses the images allowed through the optical filter. It decides how bright and what colour each speck of the image is, and, when happy, sends out its data in a pulse of information. Then it updates its opinion 60 times a second!

7 VIEWFINDER: a marvel of modern technology, shrinking a television tuner, a mono TV receiver, video amplifier and two separate time-base circuits, all down into something the size of a packet of *Mates*. It allows you to observe what the Camcorder is 'seeing', and even allows for your own weird eyesight with a tiny focus adjustment.

8 MICROPROCESSORS: (You've already used that joke, Evans!) Your Camcorder is stuffed full of these babies. Printed circuit boards are often flexible, so that they can be rammed around bends inside the machine's body. These electronics are the key to a Camcorder's compact size, and they have been miniaturised to an incredible scale. Some are taught what to do at the factory, some learn or make it up as they go along according to what use they are put to, and others have little

The Camcorder is more sophisticated than the orbital Sputnik of 1958! 'Sputnik' is Russian for 'travelling companion', as good a definition as any for today's combined video/ camera-tape-recorder.

PRESS ANY KEY

conferences about what to do next. Everything is controlled by them, including servo-motors, tape handling, audiovisual processing, focus, zoom, even a weather report if there is too much moisture in the atmosphere for safe recording.

Sony V2000 – the top-of-the-range machine

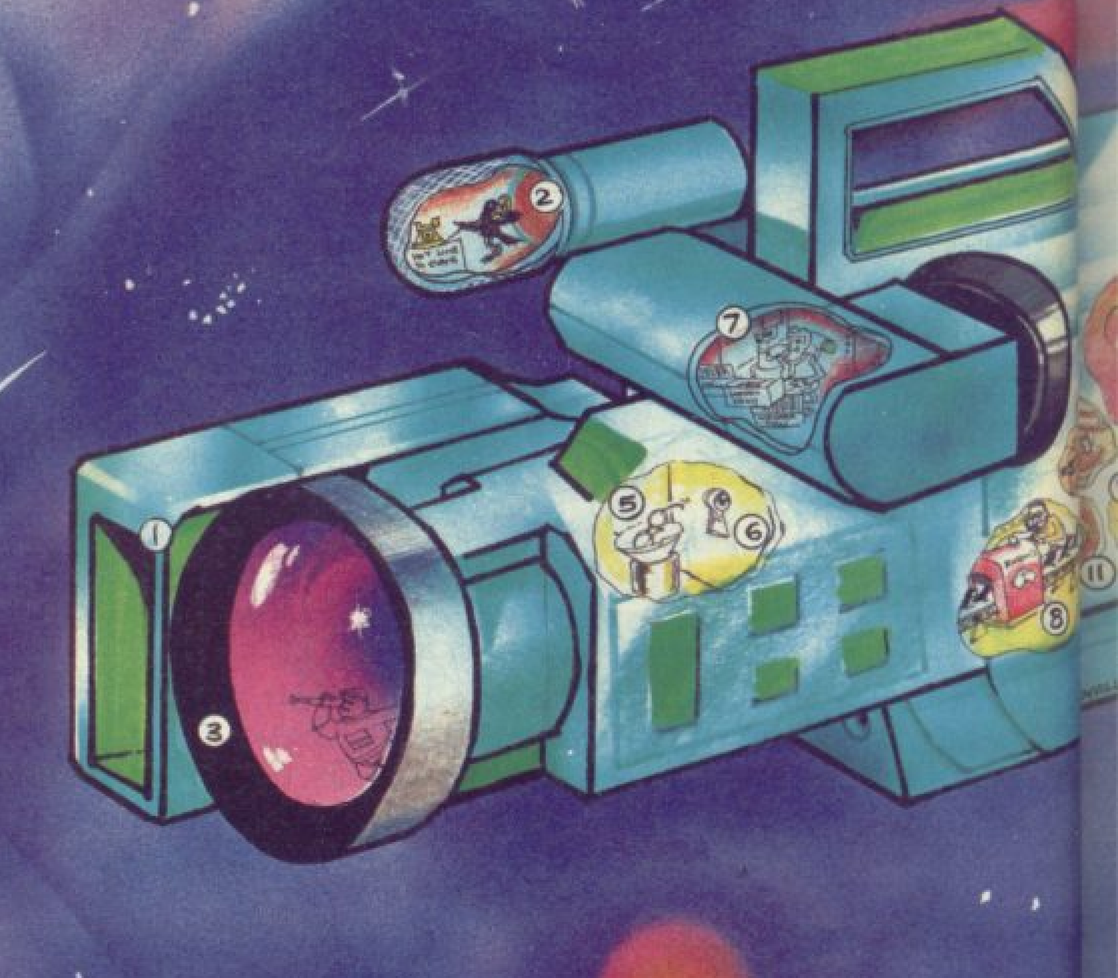


9 VIDEO CASSETTE TAPE DECK: the part of Starship Camcorder where the aliens get in, such as cat hairs, crumbs-in-sputum and very instant coffee. The tape stored on the video cassette is gently persuaded to leave its home and go for a spin around the guts of the machine, where sound and light is passed over it for safekeeping.

10 VIDEO HEAD DRUM: this is the machine's workshop, where the live image is translated into the stored image. Don't be tempted to straighten out this component, it really is meant to tilt like that.

11 CAPSTAN: the roller than moves the head drum at the correct speed, and holds the video tape tight. It's controlled by a highly sophisticated crystal timer.

12 LIGHT EMITTING If you've ever wondered what that glowing glass nipple is there by the cassette deck, it's the bit that tells your machine that the tape has come to the end, and that the Starship is rewinding and shutting down until it receives new instructions. The diode radiates a tiny infra-red spotlight, which senses the leader tape at the beginning and end of the cassette.



WHICH CAMCORDER?

Mel's analysis of what's on offer.

Don't buy a Camcorder! If you are interested in using one, rent the damn thing, borrow one, get one on seven days approval, but DO NOT BUY. We are talking anything between £600 and two grand, they take time for you to assess their wrinkles, advantages and disadvantages and their suitability for your ability need. And having said that, here's my analysis.



Panasonic NV M5B



JVC GR-45

SONY CCD-M8E HANDYCAM £599

The press is full of offers on this Video-8 poppet, anything from free holidays, a stack of prerecorded tapes or up to 50% price cuts! This makes it an absolute bargain, and I recommend it without hesitation. Both colour and sound are miles better than most VHS machines, motor noises are baffled by a robust body shell, it's a doddle to use, battery life is one of the longest available at well over an hour, there's a 50 quid optional underwater conversion housing (honest!) and a long-play option. The only serious drawback is that its lowlight use is very limited, so take the lampshade off the bedside light.

FERGUSON FC06 £620
JVC GR-C9 £644
NORMENDE CV-1100 £899

These three machines are exactly the same, only the names have been changed to confuse the buyer, so you'd be crazy to pay extra for the Normende. They are also heavily discounted in the highstreet, and if you look hard enough you might find them for as little as £499. Don't be fooled, nobody gives away something for nothing, and the reason for these bargain prices is that: a) the machines are being phased out of production, and b) the quality is chronic. They use the weeny mini-VHS cassettes, giving 30 minutes of bad quality recording, or, at the optional slow speed, one hour's worth of really terrible quality recording. They are very compact, in fact almost pocket-size, but very fragile. Audio is infested with hissing snakes and video reminds me of the attributed clashes of a Sinclair Spectrum.

JVC GR-C11 £699
TELEFUNKEN VM-2895 £699
PHILIPS VKR-6836 £700

Again these are one and the same machine, and are the replacements for the machines mentioned immediately above. And what an improvement! Chunkier, weighing in at 1.2 kilos, the picture quality is remarkable for such a small machine. Unfortunately the sound facilities are still dismal, and because some clown has omitted an option to switch off the autofocus, your video will suffer from hideously amplified autofocus servos every time something moves backwards or forwards in shot.

1. **Power Pack**
2. **Microphone**
3. **Lens**
4. **Zoom Control (that artist forgot)**
5. **Optical Filter**
6. **Image Sensor**
7. **Viewfinder**
8. **Microprocessors**
9. **Video Cassette**
10. **Video Head Drum**
11. **Capstan**
12. **Light Emitting Diode**

SONY CCD-V30 HANDYCAM £899

A reasonable machine using Video-8, with a number of faults that can be overcome. The lousy built-in mic can be replaced by plugging in a decent external mic, the lousy viewfinder fools you into thinking that your images are blurred and so you get a nice surprise when you play back through a monitor and the lousy lens is compensated by good macro facility. Battery life is about 40 minutes.

CANON VM-E2 £1099

Serious Video-8 stuff, and looking like a World War II tank! Sound and visual quality both well above average, and featuring the following important facilities: fader, macro lens option, a





JVC GR-C11



lowlight facility that actually works, manual iris control and twin-speed recording giving three hours on one cassette (which unfortunately will use five fully-charged power packs!)

SANYO VM-D1 £1100
FISHER FV-P801 £1100

Another twin-branded offering, and very good it is indeed. Both sound and images take full advantage of the excellent Video-8 potential, and the autofocus motor is almost silent. An on-board slow motion option is great fun, all the controls are dead easy to use, and I would definitely recommend this machine except for one factor: I couldn't hold the damn thing steady! Whoever designed the handle is either a sadist or an orang-utang.



Sony CCDV90 (The Handycam)

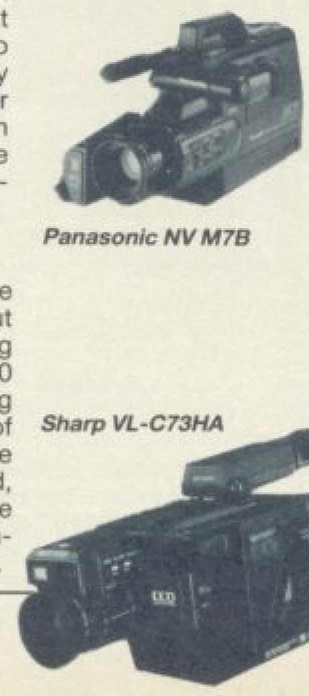


Panasonic NV M7B

SHARP VL-C73HA £1200

A gimmicky VHS-C mini-cassette model, which looks great on paper but results in some very annoying features, such as less than 30 minute's battery life and a deafening tape deck. But if you are the sort of nerd who drives a Citroën *, I suppose you'll go for gizmos like vari-speed, sound overdub, date and time character generators, still frame, on-board index-search, edit and macro.

Sharp VL-C73HA



* (Mel Croucher drives a jet black Citroñ BX-TRS Special crammed full of computer controls. He is therefore a selfconfessed nerd –Ed.) *(I also ride a Thirties black ladies bike with a wicker basket on the front. What does that make me? –Mel)* (An even bigger nerd –Ed.)

JVC GR-C7 £1200, also known as
TOSHIBA SK-60P £1250
MITSUBUSHI HS-C20 £1300
AKAI PV-C8 £1300
PHILIPS VKR-6830 £1300
SHARP VC-C50 £1400

All of these are the same mini-cassette VHS-C machine, and they are all better than a poke in the eye with a cold sausage, being incredibly easy to use. Suffering from the usual tooth-grinding top distortion on audio, the video facilities are excellent, with macro, fader, twin-speed plus good backlight and white-balance controls. The good news is that the machine is over two years old, and the multiples are trying to offload their stock on a greedy public. Bargain prices to be had as the summer sales do battle in the high street.

PANASONIC NV-M5 £1300

Do not touch this excellent VHS machine at this price, even though it is the best-selling Camcorder in the land! It has just been superseded by the NV-M7 which actually costs a quid less. The dealers will have to reduce the price soon. Having said that, if you insist on using the dreadful VHS standard, you couldn't do better than this machine. Time and data character generator, fader, audio dub, slo-mo, still, strobo, but still featuring truly dire audio quality. About £995.95, plus a free power pack and half a dozen tapes seems about right.

PANASONIC NV-M7 £1299

Firstly, its bloody heavy, and not a hand-held. Secondly, once you've erected the scaffolding on your shoulder, it's bloody good. Everything that the M5 does, plus a brilliant flying erase head (for razor sharp butt-edits and cuts), two autofocus options, twin audio visual fader, plus *'125 characters, four fonts, 10-page memory, 9-page scrolling, autodate and stopwatch.'* Hah! However, I have two criticisms: first, there is no lowlight warning visible through the viewfinder, which verges on the criminal; second, they have scrapped the headphone monitor socket on the old NV-M5, so you can't hear what you are recording. The gimmicks are useful, but not essential, and I still recommend the NV-M5 at discount prices.

HITACHI VM-C30 £1299)

Mini-VHS machine which was designed for a neanderthal bricklayer. (It looks like a housebrick, weighs like a housebrick, and your skull structure has to slope alarmingly if you want to look through the viewfinder.) Hitachi also assume that neanderthal bricklayers do not need to manually focus or zoom, and that their primitive hearing will not mind the sound of frying fat dripping into boiling mud.

PENTAX PV-C800 £1400

What a pedigree name to hang on a Camcorder! What a pig of a machine! This is in fact a Hitachi in disguise, and they ought to be ashamed of themselves. Designed for flat chests or square shoulders, the visual images are what the Japanese call 'a road of clap' and our field-test batteries clapped out after 20 minutes. Bah!

SONY CCD-V100 PRO-8 £1600)
SONY CCD-V200 PRO-8 £1800

Okay, I admit, I use Sony's Pro Video-8 range for my A/V productions, but they are tax deductible and they are simply superb. I mean superb! If you are serious about professional quality Camcording, hire one one these babies and see what I mean. The good news is that with the V200 on stream, we can expect to see some healthy discounts on last year's model, rumours are that prices will stand at an amazing £1299 for the V100 by Christmas, and when you compare these machines to anything else in that price bracket it's like comparing a sack of turnips to Vanessa Paradis's armpits. (No it's not –Ed.) (Yes it is, I've done it –Croucher.) Sony's Pro machines look like the sort of ENG cameras that TV outside broadcast units employ, they weigh in at a hefty 3 kilos, but sit comfortably on the shoulder, and they contain the Biz! PCM sound (and that means state-of-the-art digital!), stereo audio dubbing, time lapse recording, 7-hour wipe/fade parameters, vari-speed zoom,perfect pictures at any light level, even a narration monitor mic for the cameraman who wants to use an audio notepad. A truly beautiful product, with nothing to touch it.

Yes, I know all about SUPER-VHS, HQ-VHS and HI-RES SUPER V-8, and I'm sure they will improve image quality by leaps and bounds. But in the Camcorder market place of July 1988 we are assaulted from all sides by a mass of similar products, many of which are the same machine with a different badge stuck on the side. Let me leave you with these comments.

SOUND: if you are serious about the sound quality of your videos, go for Video-8. VHS come nowhere near it.
IMAGES: most Camcorders give very similar results, apart from a couple of naff models listed above. So comfort and ease of use become a major factor. Try before you buy.
SPECIAL OFFERS: Sorry about this all you excellent independent retailers, but it's the highstreet multiples who not only offer realistic stock-clearing reductions, but also back them up with a genuine 12-month guarantee. With kit as expensive as Camcorders this is a major factor.

BEST BUYS

Cheap'n'cheerful – **SONY CCD-M8E HANDYCAM** (£599 or less)
Mainstream VHS – **PANASONIC NV-M5 VHS** (discounted to £995)
State-of-the-art – **SONY CCD-V200 VIDEO-8** (£1800 or upwards of £30-a-day hire charge.)

BLUE MONDAY 2019

From Blade Runner to Robocop, future-fiction has a bleak tomorrow in store for us, where the only being to enjoy a car may be the robot that built it. Stuart Wynne outlines science fiction's cyberpunk future

In today's world the wavefront of the future seems ever less distant with yesterday's technological wetdream tomorrow's mundane hardware. The state of the hi-tech art changes at rate which would impress, if not depress an Amiga owner glumly considering RISC chips and interactive CD-RAM.

Even beyond the rarified, techno-addicted world of computers, the wider world experiences the impact of futuristic advances which, increasingly, blur the difference between fact and exotic science fiction. SDI, with its *Star Wars* nickname, is almost a cliché example of this, while serious proposals to map the human blueprint of DNA go almost unnoticed, though they may well be much more significant. In Bangladesh the more established technology of transplant surgery leads to refugees being 'culled' for their organs.

As the razor edge of a technology revolution cuts amorally and impartially through our society, it's ironic that popular SF should so often take the form of nostalgia. The *Star Wars* trilogy, for example, drew obvious inspiration from escapist fairy stories – as did its numerous imitators – while the nostalgia of *Back To The Future* and *Peggy Sue Got Married* is even more self-evident. Yet in the same year as *Star Wars* broke box office records, a short story appeared entitled *Fragments Of A Hologram Rose* – it presaged the arrival of a bleak new subgenre eventually labeled 'cyberpunk'.



"Blade Runner's quintessentially cyberpunk 'look' has influenced everything from Barclay Bank ads to Michael Jackson's Bad tour."

DREAMING ELECTRONIC SHEEP

This newest of SF new waves has been drawing a serious, not to mention highly exciting and consistently stylish line on the near-future ever since. In 1984 William Gibson, the man who kicked it all off with *Fragments*, had his first novel published to ecstatic critical acclaim. Called *Neuromancer* it won the Philip K Dick, Nebula and Hugo awards; an unprecedented sweep of SF's top honours.

The 'look' of cyberpunk, however, had been defined over two years previously – just as Gibson was starting his first draft – when the archetypal cyberpunk movie opened to a disappointing commercial response. Yet from its first poor preview showings, which earned it the cuts, additions and moronic voice-over that plague the film today, *Blade Runner* was well on its way to becoming a cult movie on a scale which calls into question the word 'cult'. In a recent *Sky* magazine interview Ridley Scott (director of both *Blade Runner* and *Alien*) argued the movie had been ahead of its time and should be rereleased (hopefully close to its original form.) Support for Scott's view can be gathered from how its immensely atmospheric, quintessentially cyberpunk 'look' has influenced everything from Barclay Bank ads to Michael Jackson's *Bad* tour to the entire logic of NETWORK 7.

Movies similarly inspired by *Blade Runner*'s trashed, hi-tech visuals include *Max Headroom*, *Aliens* and *Robocop*. The success of the latter films, particularly *Robocop*, has led to several cyberpunk writers being offered large fees for movies based on their novels and original scripts. William Gibson, for example, is currently working on the script for *Aliens III* with a short story optioned for film production, and *Neuromancer* is similarly optioned to a corporation–

CYBERPUNK AND COMPUTERS

The most dramatic example of computers in cyberpunk rely on the endlessly controversial subject of AI (artificial intelligence) which has computers as intelligent, if not more so, than humans. Even during the Fifties – the computer stone age – the subject was topic for hot debate, with the prominent mathematican Dr Alan Turing proposing a test involving a computer communicating with a person – via notes – who doesn't know his conversation is with a computer. If the person fails to recognise the computer as such, isn't it artificially intelligent?

Already, however, computers crudely mimicking psychotherapists have passed such a Turing test, although this perhaps tells us more about the depth of typical psychotheraphy sessions than computer intelligence.

Of late AI has gone through something of a bad patch, with attempts to create it in limited areas such as understanding speech running into immense difficulties. The more rules programmed into a computer telling it things – eg birds fly – the more rules seem necessary: ostriches don't. This rule-based method of programming has hence fallen out of favour, giving way to a radically new approach: connectionism.

This might give a computer the word 'intelligence' and the sound of it being spoken. Rather than programming the computer with intricate rules on how to pronounce the word, it is simply told to work its own rules out and left alone until it does so. The rules produced might be wrong, but given enough

PRESS ANY KEY

words they should evolve until reasonably accurate. Self-programming computers probably offer the most hope for AI, although what that really means is difficult to define since 'intelligence' itself can't easily be explained. Things will not be made easier when the Japanese inevitably produce a printer which tells you how to operate it and has an AI sticker on it.

For most people, however, AI is most vividly associated with *2001*'s HAL 9000 computer and cyberpunk has a similarly straightforward view of AI as *very* intelligent indeed. The ambitions of an AI are what propel the plot of William Gibson's *Neuromancer* with the Wintermute computer needing a subprogram to express itself in terms simple enough for a human to understand. In *Max Headroom*, of course, the AI is a simulation of a presumed-dead reporter that comes to distinctly quirky, if not glitched, life.

Such ideas may seem more like fantasy but an acclaimed scientist, who presumably knows more about the subject than most, was featured on a recent *Horizon* smugly predicting humans would end up – at best – as pets for AIs. Even the typically dour *Engineering Today* magazine carried a feature forseeing carbon-based life (humans) being replaced by the silicon-based variety. With biological computer chips looming on the technological horizon that may seem a little quaint now, but the general argument remains.

A rather less threatening application of computers is the creation of cyberspace, a 'consensual hallucination experienced daily by billions of legitimate operators . . .' Cyberspace has its origins in 'primitive arcade games . . . in early graphics programs and military experimentation with cranial jacks'. This Gibsonian invention has much of tomorrow's work and communications being done via a fibre-optic interconnected electronic world owing much to the visual style of the movie *Tron*. Rather than struggle with the intricacies of numerous computer operating systems cyberspace – the supreme WIMP iconic interface – has a whole alternative world

Cabana Bay Productions – formed exclusively to handle it. The British TV movie *Max Headroom*, by contrast, has already been reshot for the US market and a hugely expensive TV series launched there (now available on video in the UK.)

VCR

The best definition of cyberpunk, a subgenre which has no rigid format, is probably Gibson's. The future he extrapolated from such unusual sources as *The Face* and *Arena* owes much to a now perhaps rather dated vision of Britain, with Gibson's Boston-Atlanta Metropolitan Axis or Sprawl suffering a deteriorating economy and splintered society, the only things holding BAMA together being tube trains and a colourful gloss of bizarre fashion. The importance of the UK to Gibson's work is best shown by his latest novel: *Mona Lisa Overdrive*, which has the daughter of a Yakuza crimelord seeking refuge in a 'grim neo-Victorian' London replete with such eternal British institutions as the Dorchester hotel and Harrods. This vaguely post-apocalyptic future world, teetering on the brink of yet more undefined calamities that the individual is helpless to prevent, leaves style as virtually the only expression of individuality and sanity:

> *Julius Deane was 136 years old . . . Case had never seen him wear the same suit twice . . . His offices (had) Neo-Aztec bookcases . . . Disney-styled table lamps perched awkwardly on a low Kandinsky-look coffee table . . . A Dali clock hung on the wall between the bookcases . . .*
> ***Neuromancer** (p20-21)*

Such characters are far removed from the technocratic, superclean astronaut SF stereotype. It's a key insight of cyberpunk that the really life-changing technology is far from that involved in extravagant Soviet-American Mars shots, but rather the coffee-stained variety residing in, for example, the VCRs and home computers which have radically changed UK leisure activities. Or alternatively one could point to the oil-smeared technology which is Fiat's famous robots, drably transforming the world, if only by producing flawless cars for a market shrunken by unemployment.

TECH NOIR

The cyberpunk central characters which inhabit near-future worlds so dramatically changed, possess a dubious genius. Their skill lies in surviving on the fringes of respectable society, in the most grey areas of legality and morality, while simultaneously exploiting the latest hi-tech to come scything through a fragmented and confused world. Outlaw computer hackers are particular favourites of Gibson's work, while the principal lowlife of Walter Jon William's *Hardwired* are a smuggler and an assassin, the latter being the essential role of Rick Deckard in Scott's *Blade Runner*. The hero of another cyberpunk work, John Shirley's *Eclipse*, is a burnt-out rock star, addicted to the legendary Velvet Underground, partial to 'blue mesc' drugs and in the process of being dropped from his band for a 'minimono wire act'. As short stories by Gibson, Lewis Shiner and Pat Cadigan testify, rock music is both a popular theme and inspiration within the genre. The fractured, hyper-reality of MTV's kaleidoscopic content is in fact a useful analogy for the vision cyberpunk has of an endlessly variegated, 'designer-drugs, designer-genetics, designer-surgery' near-future.

This generally foreboding, retro-fitted *tech noir* vision has led Bruce Sterling to suggest, in *Foundation* magazine, that solutions lie 'not in dressing as elves', instead we should 'put pennies on the fuses; jam the pedal to the floorboards, and go for broke . . . We need every last mutant and nutcase we can spare, to beat the brush for paths to the next millenium'.

The sheer exuberance of this attitude under the looming shadow of disaster is what helps give cyberpunk much of its excitement and sheer energy.

THE END OF THE NATIONS?

What underpins all this dramatic writing and bleak film-making is a notion probably best expressed in Alvin Toffler's critically acclaimed work of non-fiction futurology: *The Third Wave*. Toffler's argument is that contemporary society is in the process of transforming from a Second Wave, or industrial civilisation into a Third Wave one. (A First Wave society is one which has switched from a nomadic, hunter-gatherer life-style to a settled, agricultural one.) Near synonyms for Third Wave civilization are Global Village, Information Age or Scientific-Technological Revolution (a Soviet term), all of which Toffler believes inadequate to encompass the full scope of the change which is radically affecting global society now.

The driving forces of this cyberpunk transformation might be reduced to three factors; technological, economic and ecological. Technology began the Second Wave through industrialisation which, until the advent of the microchip, was inherently stupid, favouring mass-production and mass-markets with people preferably as alike as PC clones. A new, diversifying wave of technology such as VCRs and direct-broadcast satellites will shatter such things as mass-media leading to a far more diverse culture. Twenty minutes into *Max Headroom*'s future, for instance, there are 4000 TV stations competing for viewer attention with some literally explosive advertising. (With a little luck the new Broadcasting Standards Council won't be able to make them all as boring as Sunday morning TV.)

Advances in transport have, however, simultaneously unified the world economically so that a SAM-7 sold in Central America on Monday can bring down an airliner in Afghanistan on Wednesday week. Organisations which operate on transnational lines thus stand to make huge profits and where national governments, or unions, resist its working practices, other countries will not – for example the Ford/Dundee experience. In 1973 the annual sales of General Motors were larger than the GNP of Switzerland, Pakistan and S Africa. The success of this relatively new business breed led some executives to extravagant claims:

> *The world's political structures are completely obsolete. They have not changed in a least a hundred years and are woefully out of tune with technological progress.*
> ***Jacques G Maisonrouge,***
> *Director IBM World Trade Corp.*

The spectre of all-powerful corporations has been a staple of SF at least since *Rollerball*, but cyberpunk has added a new depth to this theme with the fictional Tessier-Ashpool forming a centrepiece of Gibson's *Neuromancer*. Another example of this is Walter Jon William's *Hardwired* which features a brilliant sequence *Star Wars*-like aerial battle that merely sets the scene for the real, *Wall Street*-type war – a series of rapid-fire stock market manipulations that make use of damage caused by the dogfights to depreciate the target corporation's share values.

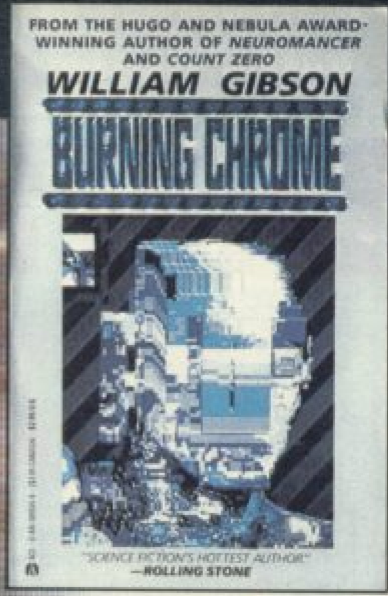
Toffler believes a passing of national government power to transnational and local democratic authorities will cope with a global marketplace exploited by transnational organizations. Cyberpunk tends to be less optimistic – possibly due to a brief look at the ineffectual EEC and defunct GLC.

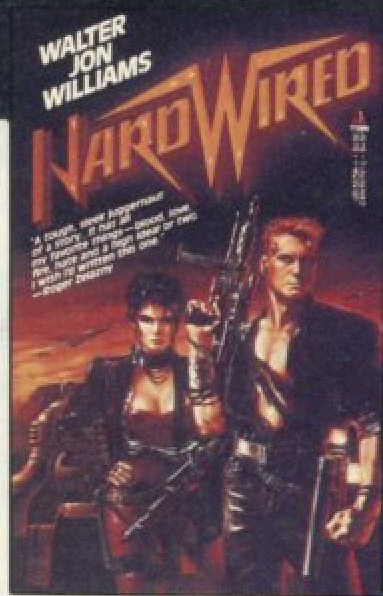
It is ecology, however, which contributes most to the pessimism of the genre. In the early Seventies the oil crisis added much weight to the arguments of THE LIMITS TO GROWTH which, using sophisticated computer models, predicted an industrial collapse in 2010 and a catastrophic drop in population by 2050. A current oil glut helps disguise the fact that even if the LIMITS timetable is flawed no one is replacing fossil fuels. At the same time the burning of fossil fuels, temporary expansion of farmland in the Amazon and – of course – ozone depletion are seriously eroding the environment. In 1988 the internationally respected Worldwatch Institute claimed that without international cooperation on the scale that occurred after World War II . . . 'there will be human suffering on a scale that has no precedent'.

The consequences of skyrocketing energy costs, mineral shortages and economic depression are the subtle subtext that underlies such films as *Blade Runner*. Scott's *Inferno*-like LA 2019 no more features characters explaining such things than *LA Law* explains the foundations of America's post-WW II success. The signs of a future environmental collapse are evident, however, in the constant acid-rain, the concept of animals being so rare the idea of killing one is almost unthinkable and the retro-fitting, rather than replacing, of virtually everything. To the inhabitants of this world the state of things are just how they are, and little cause for remark. Shirley's *Eclipse*, for example, takes place after a limited nuclear war has been fought and drawn in Europe. The continuation of dramatic human stories with

characters and motivation mollified but little by what has been wrought, and the fear of what may yet happen, is a central cyberpunk theme with a disturbing ring of truth to it. Such elements are what makes the subgenre valuable.

While the future is unlikely to resemble closely any of the numerous fictions labeled 'cyberpunk', some of the issues which it explores, such as genetic engineering, environmental collapse and artificial intelligence, will probably play some significant part in deciding how we live a few decades down the line – when the current crop of politicians and decisionmakers are long dead. The intense interest of TV companies, film producers and the broad critical respect for cyberpunk indicate that a lot of people feel that this particular sub-genre's idiocy in trying to predict the unpredictable has quite a few takers.





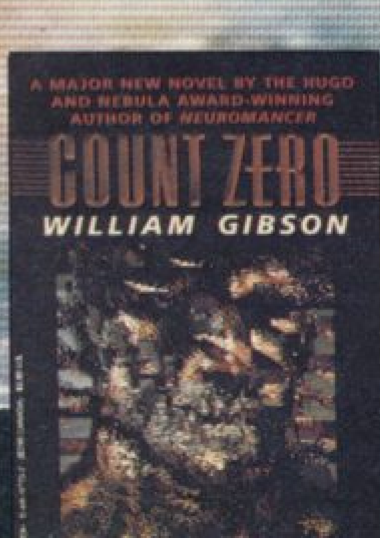
interacted with by your thoughts. Apart from the cranial jacks, all this seems little more distant than CD-RAM and a third generation ParSec machine. With increasing computer capabilities making photograph-type animation commonplace, modem-shopping/working/relaxing might well be as alluring as Gibson paints it.

Already in the US there are modem-games which allow people to fly aircraft in a 'consensual hallucination' simulating a battle zone. USAF research meanwhile seeks to do away with bulky cockpit canopies and submerge their pilots in 3-D, real-time computerised simulations of the war zone they might be dropping real bombs in. Dial the wrong code on your modem and you and your MicroProse software could nuke Managua for real . . .

Paradoxically the ultimate question underlying all these state-of-the-art technological advances is nature of human life. If humans are merely biological machines why shouldn't machines eventually be able to simulate and finally surpass us as we replaced Neanderthal Man? Cute *Newsround* stories of chimps able to communicate through icon-based languages give the lie to the traditional, biblical idea of only Man being possessed of abstract reasoning powers. Even pigeons, apparently, can be trained to follow abstract logic – so are we really so special and inimitable?

A related question is provoked by cyberspace which, with its potential for cinematic, hyper-real experiences, offers a rival to conventional reality itself. In *Neuromancer* the hero is offered a Faustian pact for his soul, the reward for his acceptance is a life within cyberspace on an island with a perfect AI simulation of his dead girlfriend. Computer 'games' such as that would indeed be 'less a game, more a way of life'. Perhaps, as is suggested by books like *Eclipse* and *Count Zero*, technology may bring a variation on the old question of God creating Man or vice versa, with humanity's subterranean dreams creating its own cyberspace god, heaven and hell.

" . . . cyberpunk characters possess a dubious genius – outlaw computer hackers are particular favourites . . . "



NEXT MONTH: a guide to some of the best examples of print and cinematic cyberpunk, beginning with reviews of some of the latter.

A DIFFERENT CODE OF HONOUR

John Woods goes roleplaying in the Far-East this month with the RuneQuest **supplement** Land Of Ninja**, and occidentally peeks at a** Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay **adventure pack**

RuneQuest

LAND OF NINJA

Role-Playing Supplement
Hardback, £10.95, 144pp

With samurai warriors undertaking great deeds in the service of their Shogun lords and the fearsome ninja performing acts of espionage and assassination, the Land of the Rising Sun makes a fine setting.

Far-Eastern RPGs – best-known currently is FGU's *Bushido* – have been around for years, so it was a natural step for Avalon Hill to provide a Japanese supplement for its *RuneQuest* roleplaying rules system; but *Land Of Ninja* can't be played without at the very least the basic RuneQuest rules and referees will almost certainly want *Advanced RuneQuest* too.

The book – Games Workshop's attractively repackaged, sturdy hardback style – contains a combination of background material, rule changes and additions, adventure ideas and a ready-to-go scenario, all set out in readable fashion.

An introduction explains that historical and geographical fact should take backseat to the fun of roleplaying. Then details from over ten centuries of Japanese history are given for referees to pick and choose whatever elements appeal to them, mixing in aspects of fantasy such as magic and unearthly creatures in whatever way they wish; however *Land Of Ninja* can be used as the basis of an historically accurate campaign if sufficient effort goes into preparation.

The Japanese caste system imposes many restrictions on what character types would realistically adventure together, so usually everyone belongs to the samurai: soldiers, priests and courtiers who directly serve the ruling lords. But there are rules for lower castes too. The versatile *RuneQuest* previous-experience system is used, so players quickly and realistically generate characters of reasonable competence and knowledge.

The book also introduces some new skills – such as Disguise and the fast-draw technique, Iaijutsu – gives rules governing weapons such as the katana, jo stick and shuriken, and details the languages that characters will be familiar with.

For me, Ki skills are one of the most interesting new features – one that referees might like to carry over to *RuneQuest* fantasy campaigns. A type of magical ability deriving from great individual skill exercised in a single burst of activity, often after lengthy preparations, Ki is only developed by PCs attaining mastery (90% ability) of a skill. A character with such a level gains the corresponding Ki at 5%, and may increase it by experience and training.

To use a Ki skill the adventurer spends a magic point before attempting their skill roll. If the dice score is less than the Ki percentage the Ki succeeds, the effects of which depend on the particular skill involved; a craftsman, say, may produce a vase which is not only beautiful but possesses minor magical properties; the Ceremony skill can be used to enhance the Ki ability, representing hours of meditation and mental preparation.

Of more use to adventuring types are the attack Ki: success with a hand weapon Ki skill allows another attack to be made at once and shuriken Ki lets the user throw multiple throwing stars simulataneously, leading to a devastating flurry of blows. All in all the Ki skills allow experienced characters to occasionally perform outstandingly impressive feats, and bring an element of magic into the game that is totally separate from run-of-the-mill spell casting.

More conventional *RuneQuest* magic is covered, however; the book gives an overview of Japanese religion and its deities, and includes details of which *RuneQuest* Divine and Spirit magic spells would be available from which temple. Avalon Hill clearly assume most referees will base campaigns in a fantasy Japan where magic is common, but those who want a 'real world' game could dispense with spell-casting without unbalancing the system.

The bulk of the background material is in two sections on samurai and ninja cultures – two very distinct societies. The importance of honour to the samurai is reflected in the HON characteristic, which characters can increase by particularly distinguished actions and decrease by violations of the code of honour. HON is important in interactions between samurai, giving a direct measure of the respect a character commands. Additionally, there are some entertaining rules for the effects of alcohol, a sad omission from many games! Overindulgence can lead to an adventurer getting sick, passing out, or if really unfortunate, both!

For ninjas a selection of tricks and devices used by these legendary spies and assassins are provided, including special skills such as Nawanukejutsu, (escaping from bonds) and gadgets such as air bags for hiding under water. The book rounds off with a bestiary of Japanese mythological creatures, gamesmastering tips and a good 20-page adventure for a group of samurai characters. A very worthy and hon'lable addition to any *RuneQuest* player's collection.



WARHAMMER CAMPAIGN

Role-Playing Supplement
Hardback, £10.99, 138pp plus pull-out colour map

This is not a new scenario pack, but a repackaging in a single hardback edition of the first two *Warhammer* adventures Games Workshop released – *The Enemy Within* and *Shadows Over Bogenhafen*. The first mostly contains background material for the Empire, largest country of the Warhammer Old World and bearing a certain similarity to medieval Germany.

The scenario itself in this first section, *Mistaken Identity* – short and easily completed in an evening's play – is intended to introduce new people to roleplaying and also lead adventurers into the action of the next section. It's entertaining and clearly-written to make the referee's job easy, and some pregenerated PCs are provided to save even more time.

Most action in the pack takes place in *Shadows Over Bogenhafen*: our heroes uncover a very sinister plot in the charming town of the title, with a trip through the sewers and a visit to the fair amongst the distractions, all in all taking probably two or three sessions to play through. PCs surviving the perils of Bogenhafen can continue in subsequent Games Workshop releases *Death On The Reik* (available now) and *Power Behind The Throne* (out soon).

My overall feelings about *Warhammer Campaign* are mixed: the book is well-produced and easy to follow, the Empire background and Bogenhafen descriptions (including a large pull-out map) could be useful for running your own adventures as well as this one, but the linearity of plot makes life very difficult for a referee whose players try to tackle problems in unusual ways and come up with angles the designers haven't thought of.

A useful campaign pack, then, for players/referees comparatively new to roleplaying. But referees may occasionally either have to curtail players' freedom of action severely to keep them following the plotline, or else ignore the preplanned plot and improvise desperately with little or no help from the book. Oh, and beware those Bogenhafen sewers, or a messy end may befall you . . .

ATARI ST SOFTWARE

ARCADE

Out Run	14.95
Gauntlet II	14.95
Buggy Boy	14.95
Enforcer	14.95
Impossible Mission II	14.95
Masters of Universe	13.95
Obliterator	19.95
Captain Blood	19.95
ST Soccer	15.95
Pink Panther	15.95
Vampire Empire	15.50
Ikari warriors	10.95
Oids	18.95
Xenon	15.50
Pub Pool	7.95

Gauntlet
Metrocross
Indiana Jones
Roadrunner
£19.95 (all 4)

Hacker II
Deep Space
Little Comp. People
Brataccas
£24.95 (all 4)

STRATEGY

War Games C. set	19.95
Carrier Command	19.95
Flight Sim II	29.95
UMS	18.95
Spitfire 40	18.95
Power Struggle	12.95

ADVENTURES

Knightmare	15.95
Dungeon Master	18.95
Amazon Adv	12.95
Police Quest	14.95
Space Quest	18.95

BUSINESS/UTILITY

Fast Basic (ROM)	69.00
Fast Basic (DISK)	35.00
1st Word Plus	59.95
Desk Top Publisher	85.00
MCC Pascal	69.00
Superbase Personal	175.00

SPECIAL OFFERS

Arkanoid	8.95
Skyrider	9.95
Star Trek	12.95
Skull-diggery	12.00
Flight Sim II	29.95
Tau Ceti	12.00
Thai boxing	6.00

Phone or write for the lowest price we can offer on our software. As we will do our best to match other dealers prices

HARDWARE AND ACCESSORIES

Pro 5000 J/stick	14.95
Speedking Joystick	11.95
Quickshot 4 J/Stick	10.95
Mouse Mat	5.95

We can't advertise all the software we have in stock, so if there's something you are after that isn't listed, give us a ring and we will do our best to get it.

* *
Postage & Packing FREE in U.K, Europe & Overseas £2.00

AMIGA SOFTWARE & HARDWARE

ARCADE

Barbarians	14.95
Jinks	18.95
Wizball	18.95
Garrison II	18.95
GeeBee Air Rally	18.95
Bubble Bobble	14.95
Ferrari F1	19.95
Sidewinder	7.95
Mach 3	14.95
Thunder Boy	14.95
Star Wars	14.95
Obliterator	19.95
Roadwars	15.50
ECO	14.95

ADVENTURES

Shadowgate	19.95
Deja Vu	18.95
Defender of Crown	19.95
King of Chicago	22.95

SIMULATIONS

Jet (IMPORT)	29.95
Flight Sim II	29.95
Scenery Disks	16.95

SPECIAL OFFERS

Pink Panther	12.95
The Wall	12.95
Strike Force Harrier	16.95

3 1/2" DISKS

x10 £14.95
x20 £27.95
x50 £69.00

VERBATIM D/S D/D

IMPORTS

Arkanoid	21.95
Footman	11.95
Vyper	11.95
Jet	29.95
COMING SOON	
Hot Ball	T.B.A
UMS	19.95
Vampire Empire	14.95
Wizball	19.95
Interceptor	T.B.A

(phone on availability)

AMIGA A500 PACKS

PACK 1

·A500 computer +
Hacker II + Music Studio +
Hitchhikers Guide +
Basic Manuals
£385.00 + VAT

PACK 2

A500 computer +
1084 col. monitor +
software
£549.00 + VAT

PACK 3

A500 computer +
1084 col. monitor +
Dot matrix printer
'works' software pack +
PC Emulator.
£679.00 + VAT

PHONE OR WRITE FOR LATEST AMIGA CATALOGUE SUMMER 88 EDITION.

TIMESOFT

35 LONDON ROAD
TOOTING
LONDON SW17 9JR

Access
VISA

01-685-9849
ENQUIRIES & ORDERS

the GAMES machine
COMPUTER & ELECTRONIC ENTERTAINMENT

CLASSIFIEDS

Your small ads are reaching over 200,000 other readers in Britain and around the world!

FOR SALE

520 STFM Atari 1Mbyte Drive. Too much software to list, but worth many hundreds. £480 No offers. Basildon (0268) 284021 after 6pm.

CBM 64, C2N tape deck, books, joysticks. All in perfect condition. Plus £300 original software, as new. Value £550. Need quick sale selling for £180. Phone Gary 0603 810871 after Neighbours.

CBM 128, datasette, over 100 games, books, magazines, 2 joysticks, Currah Speech plus Action Replay MK4 cartridge. 6 months old, still boxed. Worth over £500. Bargain at £350 ono. Tel: 0268 412135.

CBM 64, datasette, joystick, music maker, magazines, £200 worth of software including World Games, OutRun, Uridium, Sanxion plus more. All original games. Everything in excellent condition + manuals. Worth £450 but will sell for £150! Ring 01 635 9392 after 6pm.

Atari 520 STM, hi-res monitor, 2 disk drives, 100+ games, Fast Basic cartridge, 20 blank disks, dust cover, mouse mat, disk box + magazines. £400 ono. Call Darren (0430) 440735, 7 Pochard Close, Newport, North Humberside.

Spectrum +2 128K computer, Kempston joystick interface, Konix Speedking joystick. Over £345 worth of software, all good titles. Worth £500, bargain at £145. Tel: (0443) 451305 after 4pm.

Amstrad CPC 664, disk drive, colour monitor, joysticks, tape recorder, over £500 original software including MOII, GAC. Over 40 magazines, books. Total new £900+. Sell £400 ono. Consider P/X ST/Amiga. Pristine condition. Phone: (0427) 872753.

48K Spectrum, 28 games all CRASH Smashed, Competition Pro joystick and interface. Boxed with all leads. In excellent condition. Worth over £320, yours for only £125 ono. Ring: 01 733 5837 after 7pm.

CBM 64, datasette, Cheetah Mach I+, joystick, Light Pen, Currah Speech module, games including Gunship and Stealth Fighter, all originals. Good condition. Quick sale £100. Phone: Scott on (0323) 846906 after 6pm.

CBM 64, 1541 disk drive, 2 datasettes, 1 Euromax joystick, over £400 of software, several blank disks. Worth over £800. £275 ono. Tel: (0272) 556473 after 4.30pm in weekdays please. (Excellent condition).

Sega Light Phasor worth £45, selling for £20. Also 14 cartridges including OutRun, Fantasy Zone, Afterburner, Rocky. Selling for under £13 each. Karl on 01 863 2025 after 6pm.

Sega for £200 with Gun, Rocky, Bank Panic, OutRun, World Soccer, Hang-On. Brand new, still in box. Phone: 057 920 9347.

Spectrum Low Profile, SpecDrum Music Machine, £300 worth software, tape recorder, Light Pen, interface, joysticks, magazines. Will sell separately. Bargain £300. Write to: R Shaw, 11 Fulshaw Crescent, Ayr, Ayrshire, KA8 0HD or Tel: (0292) 265278.

Sega Master System 4 months old, with 12 games including Space Harrier, OutRun, After Burner, and Rocky. Light Phasor and Sega joystick £200. Contact: Justin, Westcliff-On-Sea, Essex. Tel: (0702 353430.

Atari STFM, boxed, six months old. Under guarantee. Includes over £500 software including Dungeon Master, Oids, Carrier Command, Rolling Thunder. Also Competition Pro joystick, keyboard cover, mouse. Everything perfect condition. Only

THE AUTUMN COMPUTER ART SHOW

All the details were in last month's TGM, but we promised to repeat the form for the benefit of artists working to a leter deadline. Don't forget, closing date for entries is August 18!

I would like my computer art to be considered for entry Newsfield's Autumn Computer Art Exhibition at the PC Show, Earls Court.

Name ....

Address ....

....

.... Postcode ....

Phone Number ....

☐ I am over 18
☐ I am under 18, and my legal guardian has signed below
I have read the conditions of entry printed overleaf and agree to abide by them

Entrant's signature (or legal guardian) ....

Number of pieces submitted and computer:
☐ 1 machine: .... ☐ 2 machine: .... ☐ 3 machine: ....

Please state the titles of your submitted pieces (delete disk/cass as inapplicable), followed by the FILENAME and Utility used. Any special instructions for loading or use of self-designed utilities should be written out on a separate sheet.

Title 1: (disk/cass) .... Filename: .... Utility: ....

Title 2: (disk/cass) .... Filename: .... Utility: ....

Title 3: (disk/cass) .... Filename: .... Utility: ....

☐ I have enclosed a stamped addressed envelope for the return of disk/cassette
☐ I enclose extra payment for return package to be sent recorded/registered

Please ensure the form is correctly filled out, that your cassettes/disks are all labelled correctly as per instructions on the reverse of this form, and that you have signed the form. Then send it, together with any separate enclosures, disk(s) or cassette(s) to:

AUTUMN COMPUTER ART SHOW, NEWSFIELD PUBLICATIONS, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB

£340. Blackpool (0253) 890048.

Atari 520 STFM, complete with joystick, extension lead and over £700 worth of the latest software. Worth over £1000. Only £450 ono. Tel: (0842) 3222 for details. Please ring after 5pm and ask for Simon.

Atari 520 STFM. Games worth over £150, joystick, mouse and mat, dust cover, 10 blank disks and PD disks, magazines, disk box. £290, still under guarantee. Tel: (0272) 833292 after 6pm.

CBM 64, 1541 disk drive, two tape decks (one poor quality), £600 software, Action Replay MK3, joystick, blank disks and cassettes, £350 ono. Phone: (0646) 682498 and ask for Damian.

Amstrad CPC colour, disk drive, software. (Worth £800) will sell for £350 ono. Ring: (0474) 320118 after 6pm.

CMB 64, C2N datacassette. Over £150 software games including Platoon, Black Lamp, 720, Star Wars, Solid Gold, Kikstart II. Will sell for around £175 ono. If interested tel: 063 087 2584.

Amiga Software for sale. Barbarian, Xenon, Wizball, Vampires Empire, Ferrari Formula One, Barbarian (Palace), Tetris. Prices up to £12. All originals. Tel: Haywards Heath (0444) 413687 ask for Robert. Evenings only please.

48K Speccy, tape recorder, speech unit, magazines including CRASH, lots of games and utilities like GAC, Driller, Bubble Bobble. Phone Ian on 01 946 7317 evenings. Cost price £500, save £150 at £350 ono. Now!

CBM 64, datasette, 55 games, joystick. Approximate cost £550. Sell for £175! ono. Sega 2 joysticks, Hang On, Space Harrier, Quartlet, Fantasy Zone. Approximate cost £175 sell for £95! ono. Sell together £250! Tel: (061) 336 0455.

Amstrad CPC464 colour monitor, £250 games, OutRun, Buggy Mog 7, HitPaks etc. 2 joysticks, £40 magazines, Amtix, AA, C&VG, Desk worth £30. Around £250. Ring: 01 445 2735 after 4.30pm.

Nintendo Entertainment System with six cartridges, including Super Mario Bros. and joystick also CBM 64 with sixty games, datasette, joystick and magazines. £225 ono the lot or swap for STFM. Phone: 02612 2985 and ask for Mike.

PEN PALS

6128 Pen Pals wanted, send letters to David, Hillhead, Tarbolton, Mauchline, Ayrshire KA5 5NT. Amiga Pen Pals: Sascha Grebe, Amstein 10, 5419 Raubach, West Germany.

Amiga User wishes to swap hints etc with other users world wide. All letters answered, please write to: Flex 14, Blantyre Avenue, Rise Park, Nottingham NG5 5DN. As soon as possible, thanx.

Amiga Pen Pals wanted from all over the world. Send letters to: Andy Johnston, 56 Avenue Vivian, Fencehouses, Houghton-Le-Spring, Tyne & Wear DH4 6HY.

SWAPLINE

Atari ST owner will swap Barbarian (Psygnosis) for Obliterator and Crazy Cars for Carrier Command. Phone: 01 732 1129 ask for Jeremey.

Swap or sell Spectrum 128K, over 100 games, two joysticks, interface 1, microdrive, printer, tape recorder. For Atari ST, Amiga or £325. Phone: Midhurst (073081) 2496 evenings.

Swap 48K Spectrum and all the extras for good condition Sega and games. Total cost of Spectrum and extras £320. Could accept Nintendo and games. Phone: 061 431 0506 and ask for Steve.

EVENTS DIARY

MSX LINK EXPO on August 14th at Market Deeping, Leisure Centre, Nr. Peterborough, Cambs. Admission only 50p adult, half price under 14s. Tel: (0775) 3433 for details.

USER GROUPS

CAN YOU program in Z80, 6502 or 68000? Would you like to write games, utilities etc, and start a User Group, if so then phone Alister on Banff 5333.

MISCELLANEOUS

IS LIFE being a real bummer? Then try 'World Of Dreadlock', a role playing sci-fi PBM. Send cheque/PO; £2.50 for rule book, start-up and 2 free turns to: NN Robinson, 'Tree Tops' Red Lane, Kenilworth, Warks. CV8 1PB.

DARKFIRE PBM. Enter the realms of fantasy adventures. Sorcery and sword come together, for more information write to: M Barnfield, 64 Linnet Drive, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 8AF, or phone: (0245 267203).

WHITE DWARF Issues 66, 69, 86, 89, 90 – 102, £20 (includes P&P). Issues 1 – 13 of Warlock £12 (includes P&P). Phone Jamie on 01 778 0036 Fridays and Saturdays 7pm.

MEGAPRIX and Aussie Rules. Two great PBMs from Jaspersoft, only 50p per turn. Megaprix is motor racing game, Aussie Rules is just violent!!! For details send SAE to: M Sims, 76 Mount Road, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1YF.

35 WORDS FOR ONLY £2.50!

THE GAMES MACHINE Reader Classifieds are your low-cost opportunity to reach thousands of other readers with a small ad, whether you want to buy, sell, swap or advise. Just fill in the form below and enclose with your £2.50 payment, cheque or postal order made payable to **NEWSFIELD LTD**. Photocopies of the form are acceptable.

CLASSIFIED HEADINGS

THE GAMES MACHINE Reader Classified Section is not open to trade or commercial advertisers, but Fanzines may use it. The headings are self-explanatory: WANTED, FOR SALE, SWAPLINE, USER GROUPS, PEN PALS, FANZINES and EVENTS DIARY (for club/user group news, meetings or planned events). However, be careful about TGM publishing dates with the last!

- The maximum is 35 words
- The service is not open to trade/commercial advertisers
- Small ads will be printed in the first available issue
- The editor reserves the right to refuse ads which do not comply with normal decent practice, or which could be interpreted as encouraging software piracy.

TGM READER CLASSIFIEDS

Send to **THE GAMES MACHINE READER CLASSIFIEDS, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB**

Name ....

Address ....

....

.... Postcode ....

Tick Classified heading:

☐Wanted ☐For Sale ☐Swapline ☐Pen Pals ☐User Groups ☐Fanzines ☐Events Diary ☐Miscellaneous

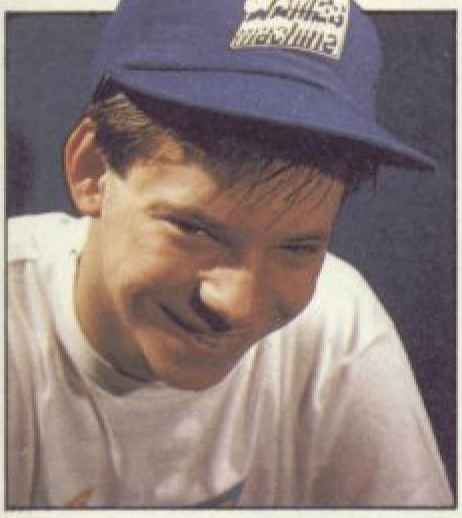
Method of payment ☐Cheque ☐Postal Order

Write your advertisement here, one word per box, and include name, address and phone number if you want them printed.

the GAMES machine
COMPUTER & ELECTRONIC ENTERTAINMENT

SHOPPING

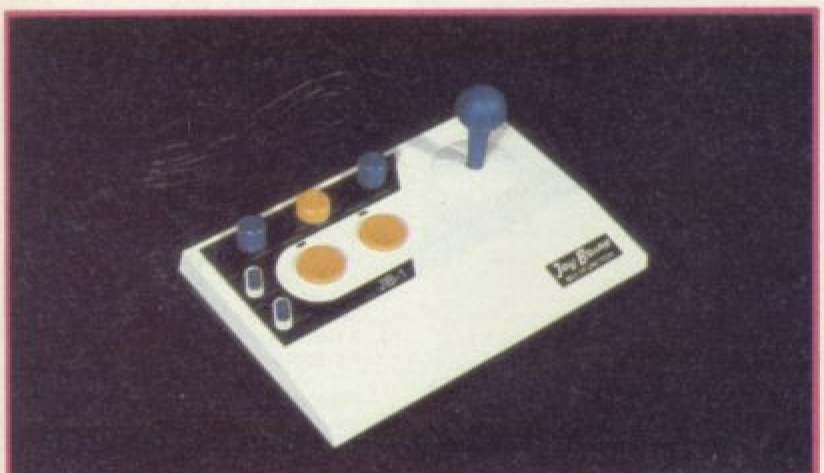
No soft background music, no deep-piled carpets, no tasteful decor, no dazzling spot-lights, no manicuring shop assistants, just hot up-to-date merchandise, fast service and low bucks, that's TGM SHOPPING. Whether top games software, high-tech joysticks or designer T-Shirts or just simply dustprotective keyboard covers, our TGM SHOPPING crew will despatch efficiently and fast. The incredibly low prices include VAT and postage & packing. Now go for the TGM SHOPPING spree . . .



IT'S FINALLY GONE TO HIS HEAD . . .
This blue 'baseball' style **CAP** with white embossed THE GAMES MACHINE logo can't help everybody's appearance, but at least it advertises your good taste
TGM CAP
OFFER £3.95, T036H

STOP . . .
your favourite mags from disappearing. Hot off the press comes the new TGM BINDER with that lovely brown leather look and embossed gold logos. Each binder comes with plastic issue number stickers.
TGM BINDER
OFFER £4.50, T037H





EUROMAX JOY BOARD
This super control console provides you with every possible firing and movement option. Directional control is switchable between microswitch-action joystick and two games paddles. Firing can be activated with two large fire buttons and Auto Fire features variable frequency setting. Two LED's indicate firing action. The unit is connected via a 2 metre long cable. Suitable for Commodore VC-20,C64,C128,C128D and AMIGA 500.
EUROMAX JOY BOARD
OFFER 22.95, T130H

KONIX SPEEDKING
The joystick that actually fits your hand, with a fire button angled for your trigger finger to ensure accurate high-speed action. Solid steel breakproof shaft with neat clicking sound for every position move you make.
KONIX SPEEDKING
OFFER 10.99, RRP 11.99, T132H



EUROMAX PROFESSIONAL
High durability, rapid response and ultra sensitive movement accuracy from this advanced ergonomic design. Ideal for left and right hand play. 1.5m cord
EUROMAX PROFESSIONAL
OFFER 15.95, T133H



EUROMAX PROFESSIONAL AUTO-FIRE
All the quality of the PROFESSIONAL, with the added bonus of the AUTO FIRE option (may not work on some computer systems).
EUROMAX PROFESSIONAL AUTO-FIRE
OFFER 18.95, T134H

POWERPLAY CRUISER
This excellent joystick features micro-switch directional control and fire action. A unique variable tension control allows the user to adjust the direction control to extra sensitive, normal and firm. A wide base and four suction cups provide good table-top operation.
POWERPLAY CRUISER
OFFER £9.99, T131H



DYNAMICS COMPETITION PRO 5000 (clear)
The designer joystick with see-through body.
DYNAMICS COMPETITION PRO 5000 (clear)
OFFER 14.00, RRP 15.95, T136H

DYNAMICS COMPETITION PRO 5000 (normal)
Features arcade quality microswitches, dual fire buttons, robust steel shaft and rubber return for smooth control and longer life. Extra long 1.5m cord
DYNAMICS COMPETITION PRO 5000 (normal)
OFFER 13.50, RRP 14.95, T135H

SHOPPING HARDWARE HUSH-80



THE SILENT PORTABLE PRINTER

The HUSH-80 from Ergo Systems is a small portable thermal printer, quiet in operation, which is ideally suited for home use, office back-up and everywhere when NLQ isn't required. Fast and efficient – no pretensions to anything else. Easy to operate, quick to load and simple to service. A friend to the budget conscious, a professional product at an economic price.

OFFER £75.00

FAST—Bidirectional text printing at a quick 80 characters per second.
QUIET—Less than 56 db noise (in case you need to hear a pin drop).
VERSATILE—Under control from your computer, print line can be set for double size characters at 40 per line, or half size characters at 160 per line.
PORTABLE—Standard unit less than 3 pounds in weight including 90ft.paper roll.
LOW COST GRAPHICS.
LINESPACING—Can be programmed to 4,5,6,8 or 9 lines per inch.
ECONOMICAL—Uses low cost thermal roll paper. Sharp tear bar permits economy tear-off of paper lengths – Use only what you need. No ribbons to run out or replace.
RELIABLE—A full 3 month limited factory warranty.

Specification:

PRINTING METHOD:
Thermal dot matrix
PRINTING FORMAT:
6 x 7 Dot Matrix 80 columns
CHARACTER SET:
Alphanumeric and International Character Set
PRINT SPEED:
80 cps
PRINT DIRECTION:
Bidirectional when printing text
Unidirectional when printing graphics
CHARACTER SIZE:
Standard 80 Characters per line
Expanded/Double Width 40 Characters per line
Condensed 160 Characters per line
PRINT MODE:
Normal/Inverse
GRAPHICS MODE:
Dot Addressable, 480 Columns, 7 Dots Per Column
PAPER:
Thermal Roll or Fax paper, 8.5 Inches Wide
30 meters Easy-load feature
INTERFACE:
Parallel (Amiga 500, Atari ST, PC-compatible, Amstrad CPC)
Serial (Commodore C64/128)
POWER REQUIREMENTS:
220VAC to Transformer (included)
Printer Input 9VAC.

ERGO HUSH-80 PRINTER (INCLUDING POWER SUPPLY, CABLE AND 1 ROLL OF PAPER) OFFER £75.00 INCL. VAT AND P&P

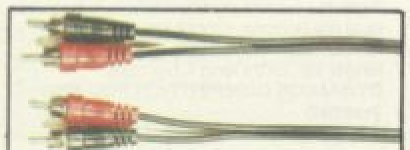
COMMODORE C64/128 VERSION, CODE T037H
AMSTRAD CPC VERSION, CODE T038H
AMIGA 500 VERSION, CODE T039H
ATARI ST VERSION, CODE T040H
PC VERSION, CODE T041H

Please allow up to 28 days for delivery.

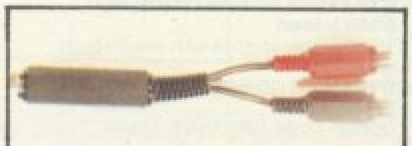
SHOPPING HARDWARE

AMIGA STEREO SOUND KIT

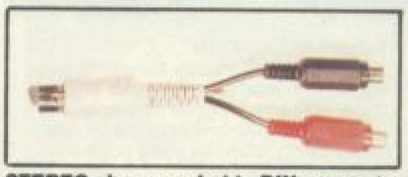
Are you using your Amiga correctly? Have you forgotten that the Amiga can deliver ear-splitting stereophonic soundeffects and music? Well then, connect your Amiga up to your powerful STEREO system with the help of this comprehensive 4-piece kit containing:



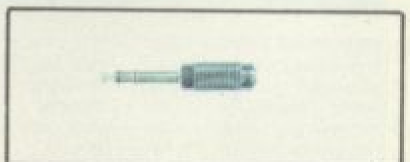
4ft STEREO phono plug to phono plug cable (Amiga audio output to HIFI input)



STEREO phono socket to 0.25 in socket short cable (phono to large headphone socket)



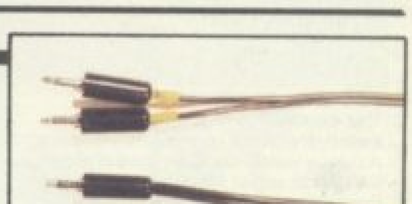
STEREO phono socket to DIN connector short cable (phono to 5-pin 180 DIN converter)



STEREO 0.25 in jack to 3.5mm socket (professional 0.25 in jack to audio/earphone socket converter)

AMIGA STEREO SOUND KIT
OFFER 9.95, T042H

SPECTRUM+3 CASSETTE LEADS



Link your SPECTRUM+3 to your cassette recorder and gain access to your large collection of Spectrum 48 tape software.

SPECTRUM+3 CASSETTE LEADS
OFFER 3.95, T043H

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED SOFTWARE

ALIEN SYNDROME, ACE
T202M
CBM64/128 cass OFFER 7.99
CBM64/128 disk OFFER 9.99
ATARI ST disk OFFER 15.99

BEYOND THE ICE PALACE, Elite
T218M
AMSTRAD CPC cass OFFER 7.99
AMSTRAD CPC disk OFFER 11.99
ATARI ST disk OFFER 11.99

BIONIC COMMANDOS, GO!
T229M
CBM64/128 cass OFFER 7.99
CBM64/128 disk OFFER 9.99

BUGGY BOY, Elite
T100M
SPEC48/128 cass OFFER 6.40
SPECTRUM+3 disk OFFER 11.95
CBM64/128 cass OFFER 7.95
CBM64/128 disk OFFER 11.95
AMSTRAD CPC cass OFFER 7.20
AMSTRAD CPC disk OFFER 11.95
ATARI ST disk OFFER 15.99

CALIFORNIA GAMES, Epyx/US Gold
T101M
PC 5.25" disk OFFER 19.99
PC 3.5" disk OFFER 19.99

CAPTAIN BLOOD, Ere International
T102M
ATARI ST disk OFFER 19.95

CARRIER COMMAND, Rainbird
T103M
ATARI ST disk OFFER 19.95

DARK SIDE, Incentive
T208M
SPEC48/128 cass OFFER 7.95
SPEC+3 disk OFFER 11.95
AMSTRAD CPC cass OFFER 7.95
AMSTRAD CPC disk OFFER 11.95
CBM64/128 cass OFFER 7.95
CBM64/128 disk OFFER 10.40

DEFLEKTOR, Gremlin Graphics
T220M
ATARI ST disk OFFER 15.99

DELUXE MONOPOLY, Leisure Genius
T211M
CBM64/128 cass OFFER 10.40
CBM64/128 disk OFFER 12.95

DRILLER, Incentive
T207M
PC disk OFFER 15.95

EARTHLIGHT, Firebird
T201M
SPEC48/128 cass OFFER 6.40

ECHELON, Access
T104M
CBM64/128 disk OFFER 11.99

EDDIE EDWARDS:SUPER SKI, Loriciels
T224M
AMSTRAD CPC cass OFFER 7.99
AMSTRAD CPC disk OFFER 11.99
ATARI ST disk OFFER 15.99
PC disk OFFER 19.99

F-1 SPIRIT, Konami
T105M
MSX II Mega Cartridge OFFER 18.95

FOUNDATIONS WASTE, Exocet
T230M
ATARI ST disk OFFER 19.95

GAUNTLET II, US Gold
T206M
ATARI ST disk OFFER 15.99

GREAT GIANA SISTERS, US Gold
T203M
CBM64/128 cass OFFER 7.99
CBM64/128 disk OFFER 9.99
AMIGA disk OFFER 19.99

GUTZ, Ocean
T106M
SPEC48/128 cass OFFER 6.40
CBM64/128 cass OFFER 7.20

IKARI WARRIORS, Elite
T107M
SPEC48/128 cass OFFER 7.99
SPECTRUM+3 disk OFFER 10.44
CBM64/128 cass OFFER 7.95
CBM64/128 disk OFFER 11.95

IMPOSSIBLE MISSION, US Gold
T108M
SPEC48/128 cass OFFER 7.24
CBM64/128 cass OFFER 7.99
CBM64/128 disk OFFER 11.99
AMSTRAD CPC cass OFFER 7.99
AMSTRAD CPC disk OFFER 11.99
ATARI ST disk OFFER 15.95
PC disk OFFER 15.95

INTERCEPTOR, Electronic Arts
T204M
AMIGA disk OFFER 19.95

JET, subLOGIC
T109M
AMIGA disk OFFER 39.95

KARNOV, Electric Dreams
T219M
SPEC48/128 cass OFFER 7.99

LEATHERNECK, Microdeal
T210M
ATARI ST disk OFFER 15.95
AMIGA disk OFFER 15.95

MATCH DAY II, Ocean
T110M
SPEC48/128 cass OFFER 6.40
CBM64/128 cass OFFER 7.20
AMSTRAD CPC cass OFFER 7.20

NORTH STAR, Gremlin Graphics
T111M
SPEC48/128 cass OFFER 6.44
CBM64/128 cass OFFER 7.99
CBM64/128 disk OFFER 11.99
AMSTRAD CPC cass OFFER 7.99
AMSTRAD CPC disk OFFER 11.99
ATARI ST disk OFFER 15.99

OBLITERATOR, Psygnosis
T112M
ATARI ST disk OFFER 19.95
AMIGA disk OFFER 19.95

OOPS!, Big Apple
T214M
CBM64/128 cass OFFER 7.95
CBM64/128 disk OFFER 11.95

PAC-LAND, Quicksilva
T113M
CBM64/128 cass OFFER 6.40
CBM64/128 disk OFFER 11.95

PANDORA, Firebird
T114M
CBM64/128 cass OFFER 7.95
CBM64/128 disk OFFER 10.40
AMIGA disk OFFER 15.95
ATARI ST disk OFFER 15.95

PATTON VS ROMMEL, Electronic Arts
T213M
CBM64/128 disk OFFER 11.95

PLATOON, Ocean
T217M
PC disk OFFER 15.95

PREDATOR, Activision
T115M
ATARI ST disk OFFER 11.99

RASTAN SAGA, Imagine
T116M
SPEC48/128 cass OFFER 6.40
SPECTRUM+3 disk OFFER 11.95

RESCUE MISSION, Sega
T209M
SEGA cartr OFFER 19.95

RETURN TO GENESIS, Firebird
T117M
ATARI ST disk OFFER 15.95

ROCKFORD – THE ARCADE GAME, Melbourne House, T118M
AMIGA disk OFFER 15.99
ATARI ST disk OFFER 15.99
PC disk OFFER 15.99

SALAMANDER, Konami
T119M
MSX cartridge OFFER 19.95

SAMURAI WARRIOR, Firebird
T120M
CBM64/128 cass OFFER 7.20
CBM64/128 disk OFFER 11.95

SIDEWINDER, Mastertronic
T121M
AMIGA disk OFFER 7.99

SOLDIER OF LIGHT, ACE
T204M
SPEC48/128 cass OFFER 6.44



SONS OF LIBERTY, SSI
T215M
CBM64/128 disk OFFER 19.99

SOPHISTRY, CRL
T221M
SPEC48/128 cass OFFER 6.40

SPIDERTRONIC, Infogrames
T223M
ATARI ST disk OFFER 15.95

STARQUAKE, Mandarin
T227M
ATARI ST disk OFFER 15.95
PC disk OFFER 15.95

STRIP POKER II PLUS, Anco
T226M
ATARI ST disk OFFER 11.95

TARGET RENEGADE, Imagine
T122M
SPEC48/128 cass OFFER 6.40
CBM64/128 cass OFFER 7.20
AMSTRAD CPC cass OFFER 7.20

THE FLINTSTONES, Grand Slam
T123M
SPEC48/128 cass OFFER 7.20
CBM64/128 cass OFFER 7.95
CBM64/128 disk OFFER 11.95
AMSTRAD CPC cass OFFER 7.20
AMSTRAD CPC disk OFFER 10.40
AMIGA disk OFFER 15.95
ATARI ST disk OFFER 15.95
MSX II cassette OFFER 7.20

THE THREE STOOGES, Mirrorsoft
T225M
CBM64/128 disk OFFER 11.99
AMIGA disk OFFER 23.99

THEXDER, Activision
T228M
AMIGA disk OFFER 15.99

TIME AND MAGIK, Mandarin Software
T124M
SPEC48/128 cass OFFER 11.95
SPECTRUM+3 disk OFFER 11.95
CBM64/128 cass OFFER 11.95
CBM64/128 disk OFFER 11.95
AMSTRAD CPC cass OFFER 11.95
AMSTRAD CPC disk OFFER 11.95
AMIGA disk OFFER 15.95
ATARI ST disk OFFER 15.95
PC disk OFFER 15.95

USAS, Konami
T125M
MSX II Cartridge OFFER 19.95

VAMPIRE'S EMPIRE, Magic Bytes
T126M
CBM64/128 cass OFFER 7.99
CBM64/128 disk OFFER 11.99
AMIGA disk OFFER 15.99

VENOM STRIKES BACK, Gremlin
T127M
SPEC48/128 cass OFFER 6.44
CBM64/128 cass OFFER 7.99
CBM64/128 disk OFFER 11.99
AMSTRAD CPC cass OFFER 7.99
AMSTRAD CPC disk OFFER 11.99

WIZBALL, Ocean
T222M
ATARI ST disk OFFER 15.95
AMIGA disk OFFER 19.95

YETI, Destiny
T128M
SPEC48/128 cass OFFER 7.24
CBM64/128 cass OFFER 7.24
CBM64/128 disk OFFER 10.44

BUDGET RANGE

ORDER FOUR GAMES IN THE £1.99 RANGE AND PAY FOR THREE (£5.97 PAYMENT TOTAL) – A SAVING OF £1.99!
ORDER FOUR GAMES IN THE £2.99 RANGE AND PAY FOR THREE (£8.97 PAYMENT TOTAL) – A SAVING OF £2.99!
JUST FILL IN THE NAME AND PUBLISHER OF THE FOUR GAMES REQUIRED AND THE PAYMENT TOTAL OF £5.97/£8.97 (DON'T USE THE OFFER PRICE TABLE)

THE MEGA CHOICE:

*APART FROM OUR HIGHLY RECOMMENDED GAMES LIST, YOU CAN ORDER **ANY GAME** RELEASED BY THE MAJOR SOFTWARE HOUSES TO DATE ON CASSETTE,CARTRIDGE OR DISK.*

OUR OFFER PRICES ARE VALID FOR ANY FULL-PRICED GAMES AND INCLUDE FIRST CLASS POSTAGE AND PACKING – NO OTHER EXTRA CHARGES
LOOK UP THE PRICE OF EACH GAME IN THE OFFER TABLE, ENTER THE OFFER PRICES ON THE ORDER COUPON, THEN ADD THEM UP.
ORDERS FOR TITLES WHICH ARE NO LONGER IN DISTRIBUTION WILL BE RETURNED.
YOU WILL BE REGULARLY NOTIFIED OF ANY DELAYS CAUSED BY LATE RELEASES.

SOFTWARE OFFER PRICE TABLE

RRP	OFFER	SAVE
4.99	**3.99**	1.00
5.95	**4.74**	1.20
7.95	**6.40**	1.55
7.99	**6.44**	1.55
8.95	**7.20**	1.75
8.99	**7.24**	1.75
9.95	**7.95**	2.00
9.99	**7.99**	2.00
11.99	**9.99**	2.00
12.95	**10.40**	2.55
12.99	**10.44**	2.55
14.95	**11.95**	3.00
14.99	**11.99**	3.00
19.95	**15.95**	4.00
19.99	**15.99**	4.00
23.00	**18.40**	4.60
24.95	**19.95**	5.00
28.95	**23.15**	5.80
29.95	**23.95**	6.00
34.95	**27.95**	7.00

HOW TO ORDER:

WRITE REQUIRED GAME(S) ON ORDER LIST, INCLUDING MEDIA TYPE, COMPUTER AND ORDER CODE (WHERE LISTED).
IF OFFER PRICE NOT INDICATED,CHECK IN AD OR REVIEW FOR CORRECT RECOMMENDED RETAIL PRICE (RRP).
LOOK UP SPECIAL OFFER PRICE AND WRITE ON ORDER FORM.
ADD UP TOTAL AND ENCLOSE CHEQUE OR POSTAL ORDER OR ALTERNATIVELY USE ACCESS/VISA FACILITY (DON'T FORGET TO INDICATE EXPIRY DATE!).
REMEMBER:
GAMES ORDERS REQUIRE ORDER CODE OR MEDIA TYPE AND COMPUTER, GARMENT ORDERS ORDER CODE OR GARMENT SIZE, HARDWARE ORDERS ORDER CODE. INCOMPLETE ORDER FORMS WILL BE RETURNED.

PLEASE RING (0584) 5620 IF IN DOUBT!

PRICES VALID FOR UK/EIRE/EUROPE ONLY.
FOR OVERSEAS ORDERS PLEASE ADD £2.00 PER ITEM FOR AIR MAIL DELIVERY

DELIVERY:

NOT ALL LISTED PRODUCTS WILL HAVE BEEN RELEASED AT PRESS TIME.
GOODS WILL BE DESPATCHED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. CUSTOMERS WILL BE INFORMED OF ANY LONG DELAYS.

SUBS OFFER

An absolutely free EUROMAX JOY STAR joystick worth £9.95 is waiting for every reader who decides to subscribe to THE GAMES MACHINE for twelve great issues. Yes, if you act now, we will send you this superb EUROMAX microswitch-action joystick as an amazing subscription gift. Compatible with most games computers, it will provide you with excellent service and give you control over the most hairy conditions you're ever going to encounter in modern computer gamesmanship. Join our subscription list now and grab hold of your future games destiny . . .



The **EUROMAX JOY STAR** is an excellent microswitch-action joystick featuring precision top and front fire buttons and Auto Fire. It can be operated handheld or can be mounted on the table via vice-grip suction cups. **JOY STAR** connects to any Atari-compatible joystick port and will therefore operate with most games computers. Auto Fire may not work on certain systems.

BACK NUMBERS

*BACKISSUES*BACKISSUES*B*
*BACKISSUES*BACKISSUES*B*
*BACKISSUES*BACKISSUES*B*

TX:001 Oct/Nov 87

Light Wars – The Laser Tag Craze! Console Overview! Computers in the Movies! The Robosystem – the presentatition system of the future! TV Gaming – Anglia TV's new adventure game! The Compact Disc revolution! Mel Croucher's Software Sexism! Ben Daglish and Rob Hubbard speak out! Previews! Reviews!

TX:002 Dec/Jan 87/88

Robots In Video! Mel Croucher's Violence In Software! Getting in to Satellite TV! Licensed To Kill – The race for the latest Licenses! Not A Penny More – An adventure story! Robin Candy paints with Degas Elite (ST)! Interview with Stephen Blower, the man behind the Ocean/Imagine adverts! Previews! 38 pages of Reviews!



TX:003 February 88

Coin-Op Confrontation! TGM On-Line – A look at Compunet! Censoring Computer Games! Mel Croucher's Stereotypes In Software! Robin Candy paints with Deluxe Paint II! Low-cost multi-track recorders reviewed! Rob Steel's reviews of new adventures! A round-up of Board Games! Robin Evans's Mercy Dash! Previews! 32 pages of Reviews!



TX:004 March 88

Child Abuse – Ripped off programmers reveal all! Mel Croucher guide to making your own video promos! Digital Pictures, the leading edge in Computer Graphics! John Gilbert takes a look at 16-bit simulations! Coin-Op Confrontation! John Woods on Fantasy Games! Sequencing and Midi! Previews! Reviews!



TX:005 April 88

Mel Croucher's chart rantings! Elite Interview! John Gilbert at the Toy Fair! Toys For The Boys – Mel Yuppie's Guide to Electronic Rubbish! John Bates in drumming mood! More Fantasy Games Reviews! More Board Games Reviewed! More Adventures from Rob Steel! More Reviews!

ORDER FORM

I want to subscribe to 12 issues of **TGM** and receive my free **JOY STAR** joystick.

Please tick the appropriate box:

- ☐ I enclose £18.00 for a new TGM subscription mainland UK
- ☐ I enclose £25.00 for a new TGM subscription outside mainland UK – surface mail
- ☐ I enclose £38.00 for a new subscription outside Europe – Air mail

EARLY WARNING:

If you wish your sub to commence with issue 9, we must receive your coupon no later than 29th June 1988.

Please allow 28 days for your free gift.



*BACKISSUES*BACKISSUES*BACKISSUES*BACKIS
*BACKISSUES*BACKISSUES*BACKISSUES*BACKIS
*BACKISSUES*BACKISSUES*BACKISSUES*BACKIS



TX:006 May 88

Battle Between Prog – Axion's Techforce fighting robots! John Gilbert assesses the impact of microchip technology on model trains and spiders! Interview with Bulletin 1000! Grow Your Own Radio – Mel Croucher on the broadcasting revolution! TGM has a go at KJC's Play By Mail game! Boardgame news! John Woods plays a Nordic RPG bid and indulges in gruesome reading from Harn! A double dose of Mercy Dash! Forever musical Jon Bates rehearses Atari ST instruments!

Please supply the following BACK NUMBERS (Circle required items):

1 2 3 4 5 6

BACK ISSUES £1.45 (Inclusive P&P)

OVERSEAS PLEASE ADD £0.80 TO ABOVE PRICES

SPECIAL QUANTITY DISCOUNT:
Order **FOUR** issues and pay for **THREE**.

The Special Software Discount Offer Prices only apply to recommended retail prices for software, not to already highlighted, discounted special offers, hardware and other goodies. No other discounts may be applied.

CODE	ITEM	CASS/DISK	PRICE

TOTAL

SUBS TOTAL

BACKISSUES TOTAL

ORDER TOTAL

MY COMPUTER IS:

Please use BLOCK CAPITALS

Name ....

Address ....

....

....

.... Postcode ....

Please make cheques/postal orders payable to TGM. It is best to avoid sending cash payments. Please DO NOT enclose ANY order with mail to the EDITORIAL side of the magazine as this will result in DELAYS! Send your orders to the address below.

☐ I enclose a cheque/p.o. for £

☐ I wish to pay by **VISA/ACCESS** (Delete as appropriate)

Please debit my VISA/ACCESS ACCOUNT £

Please charge my account No:

Expiry Date ____________ Signature ____________

Access VISA

SEND THIS FORM TO
TGM SHOPPING, PO BOX 20, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB


She's de Biggest Bloodsucka
Since Countess Dracula
Now here she is in
Her Big Spectacula
MERCY DASH
On Ice
©1988 Mel Croucher
AT LAST! IT TOOK DAD LONG ENOUGH TO POST THOSE TGM QUESTIONNAIRES.
KNOCK KNOCK
HOPE HE POSTED THE ONE FROM JOHN O'GROATS FIRST!
WELL DONE, DAD! GO AND MAKE YOURSELF A DRINK... GOSH, ROVER! YOU WERE A VOLE WHEN YOU LEFT HERE...
YEAH, WELL...
SPLOONT
I'LL JUST SEE HOW I'M DOING AT TGM H.Q BEFORE I GO TO THE PUB TO CELEBRATE MY POPULARITY!
TGM
...AT THE LATEST COUNT, MERCY - YOU SCORE MINUS FOUR!
TERHERHER! MINUS FOUR!
EH? THAT CAN'T BE! I- I MEAN DAD- I MEAN- HAVE YOU CHECKED YOUR POSTBAG RECENTLY?
YEAH, AND THERE WERE FOUR HUNDRED ENVELOPES FROM ALL OVER THE COUNTRY - ALL OF THEM NEWSFIELD STATIONERY - ALL ADDRESSED IN CRAYON!
AAARGH! THE OLD LOONY- I MIGHT AS WELL HAVE GOT THE VOLE TO DO IT...
WELL, WE'LL SEND YOU A BILL FOR THE ENVELOPES, MERCY!
DUNNO WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, BOYS... BUT MY RATINGS'LL SOAR!
BETTER PUT SOME OINTMENT ON IT, THEN!
YOU BETTER FIX THE STATISTIX OR I'LL NIX YOUR PRIX!
AT THE RAM&INTERFACE, MERCY CONFERS WITH HER PR AGENTS...
PRIX?
IT'S FRENCH FOR "ACCOLADE". SHE'S JUST GOT THE PRONUNCIATION WRONG...
THERE'S NOWT WRONG WITH MY PRONUNCIATION - SO WATCH OUT! NOW GO OUT AND PERSUADE LOADS OF INNOCENT KIDS TO MAKE ME THE NUMBER ONE FEATURE!
HOW?
SAME WAY YOU PERSUADE KIDS TO DO ANYTHING THESE DAYS... AND BE CAREFUL- IT'S LOADED!
AND SO...
HEY, MEL! HOLDING THIS WARM GUN MAKES ME FEEL HAPPINESS!
YOU CAN USE GUNPOINT- I'M A PACIFIST- I'LL STICK TO NEEDLEPOINT!
DUNNO WHY YOU BOTHER WITH THAT NYLON MASK- IT MAKES YOU LOOK MORE LIKE YOU THAN YOU DO NORMALLY!
SOON, THE AMENDED RESULTS OF THE READERS' QUESTIONNAIRE ARE COMPUTED BY AN MSX....
OH, GOLDIE LOCKS, AND HER BROTHER, BOL! THERE MUST STILL BE NEG VOTES COMING IN!
MERCY DASH STILL ROAD OF CLAP
YOUNG FOLK JUST WANT SEX 'N' VIOLENCE
BANG GOES MY TRANS-PLANT!
DON'T TELL ME YOUR NEW KIDNEY'S BURST!
ALL RIGHT! WE'LL GIVE IT TO THEM - LET'S PULL OUT ALL THE STUDDY BLOPS!
YAY
BYE DOW!
BLOOD
AND SO...
THIS IS MORE BIO-DEGRADING THAN MEETING CROUCHER AT THE 'VIXEN' PRESS LAUNCH!
HOW COME WE'RE SKATING ON THIN ICE THIS MONTH?
AREN'T WE EVERY MONTH?
REMOVES BLOOD, SWEAT, SECRETIONS, SKID-MARKS.
HI, I'M CLEMENT CHAMBERS AND I'VE GOT LOADSA GIZZARDS!
CAVE! GITCHA SKATES ON! IT'S THE ICE SQUAD!
VIOLENCE, IDIOT- NOT VIOLETS!
SMEK!
OH, FOX'S MINTS!
CUTEY-POO GETS HIS
CRAPOMETER
I'LL TAKE THIS CAPTION AS EVIDENCE
LET ME GO! DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM?!
THE BIG BUST
CYCLIN' ON THE MOTORWAY, AN' NOW THIS
EVANS! WHERE'S MY HOT CHOCOLATE SAUCE PANEL? YOU'VE DONE IT THIS TIME, YOU BONEY ARTICLE!
AW WELL. BONDAGE AND DISCIPLINE HAS GOTTA BE AS GOOD AS HOT CHOCOLATE SAUCE...
IF THAT'S AN INSIDE JOKE, WE DON'T WANNA KNOW!

POSTE HASTE

THE GAMES MACHINE's regular Play By Mail column

Our TGM street gang is consolidating its position in KJC's It's A Crime**, so for this month's column we will concentrate on new releases – and return to crime next month.**

DARK BLADES – A LIVING ADVENTURE

Standard Games PBM

Previewed in TGM**007**, this exciting, well-presented game rewards a closer look.

The scenario concerns the exceptionally bloody war between Humans and Mon-Ogres (half Man, half Ogre). Players may choose to be either but not any of the other races – there are more than ten – and then choose between Traders and Warriors. Traders are given a village to develop, with population and morale being key indicators of success. A Trader's responsibilities include choosing what goods to Produce and setting their Price (too high and goods won't sell, too low and you won't make a profit), Feeding your people (too little: starvation, too much: no reserve for next year), Harvesting (the later it's left the bigger the crop – and risk of disaster) and Hiring mercenaries to man mule trains for Trading with other villages. Another unique ability of Traders is sending messages, such as advertising low-price goods.

The success of a Warrior necessarily depends on different skills and will be judged by the strength, and quality of the group a player builds up. Commands available include Allying yourself with other Warrior groups or with a single Trader, setting seven different Movement 'attitudes' from Charge to Coward, Abandon a battle-weakened player (this affects group morale), Set Battle Retreat Percentage (when this is reached your group withdraws) and Individual Character Orders. The latter covers a broad spectrum of commands and the number you're allowed varies with how many individuals you have managed to recruit. Individuals can be ordered to Use items (ie armour), Learn a Skill, Give, Drop or Examine an item and Recruit characters. Characters can be described by as many as eight different factors, from Loyalty to Charisma.

All movement, whether by Warrior groups or Trader mule trains, takes place on a hex map which allows travel in six directions over 21 types of terrain (some requiring boats.) Each hex is 5 miles across at the widest point and the number of hexagons you can move per turn depends on the terrain type and the average of a group's individuals' movement points. Rather than simply move X number of hexagons in a turn, days are split into six time periods. Battles operate along similar lines so arrangements can be made for allies to attack at different times of day. A factor affecting both types of action is Line Of Sight Vision which means what your characters can see depends on their current environment.

The aim of all players is to complete ten tasks before taking on a final quest. The first player to complete a quest wins the game, free participation in another game and a chance to win the £1,000 Golden Dragon. If all this seems a bit ambitious for a new PBM company you can be assured that the programming is in the experienced hands of **Stewart Green**. His previous works include the PSS computer titles *Annals Of Rome* and *Pegasus Bridge*. His *Dark Blades* program is run on an Atari 1040 ST with hard disk.

If you would like to play this 'living adventure' the startup package is available from **Standard Games PBM, *Arlon House, Station Road, Kings Langley, Herts WD4 8LF*.** The pack costs £5, but all turns thereafter cost a £1.25 flat rate, even if you've got 40 characters requiring 40 individual orders.

The large-scale and very attractive box packaging for **Dark Blades**



CREEPHOUSE

Project Basilisk

An interesting new release from the makers of *Troll's Bottom* is a game with a distinctly *Rocky Horror* sense of humour. Despite this, however, the game's format is closely modelled after *It's A Crime* with the amount of form-filling minimised so as to appeal to the 12-16 computer gamer market.

Another factor designed to attract this market is '3-D Adventure-Vision' which has been very much inspired by the *Knight Lore* 'Filmation' style of computer games. What this means is that objects within the three floors of Creephouse can be picked up, moved around, hidden and even stacked. The amount of objects that can be carried varies with their weight, so some may need to hidden in the furniture, like *Spy vs Spy*. The difference is that there are 39 other adventurers trying to solve the adventure at the same time as you. The computer acting umpire for all this activity is an Amstrad PC 1512 expanded to 640K RAM with a 32 Mbyte Winchester Hard Disk Card.

The objective of *Creephouse* is to escape from it by frightening away monsters guarding staircases to the upper floors. Most important factor in the game, therefore, is your Fright Level, set at 12 to start – you get sent to the graveyard if it falls below 3. A more traditional way of visiting the graveyard is by losing too much blood, all too easy in a house run by Dr Amy Cula, who allows 60 monsters free room and board.

Before you get snobby about such company, however, you should remember that you're no model of normalcy either: stand before a window with in sight of the full moon and you can BECOME a Wulf, and you can transform into a Creep or Slime at any time. Each creature has different capabilities – Wulfs can leap portcullises for instance. Transformations are greeted with the house's creatures shouting 'X is SLIME!'.

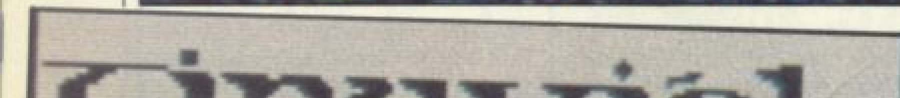
As one of the more bizarre *Knight Lore* 'clones', *Creephouse* provides a welcome, if somewhat limited alternative to games like *It's A Crime*. The address to write to is: **Project Basilisk, *PO Box 24, Sheerness, Kent, ME12 3QU*.** *Creephouse*'s starter pack (rulebook, maps and two free turns) is free, but turns thereafter cost 90p each.

Another Project Basilisk game featuring 3-D Adventure Vision is *Battle Crab*, planned to be released on September 1. An SF game, we'll tell you more in further issues.

THE GAMES MACHINE is always delighted to hear from PBM addicts, and from any PBM companies. CRASH was voted as providing the best PBM coverage of any magazine after *Flagship* – the magazine may be TGM's stablemate, but we reckon we ought to take that coveted accolade over, so your input is extremely valuable. Write to: POSTE HASTE, THE GAMES MACHINE, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB*.

ENGAGE PHOTON DRIVE!

THE GAMES MACHINE's Robin Candy gets down to some more electronic daubing with a brand-new Amiga art utility from MicroIllusions, marketed in the UK by Activision



Robin Candy's **Tinuviél:** ***created to test out* Photon Paint*'s features***

Could anyone hope to better *DeluxePaint II* (Electronic Arts) as the standard by which Amiga art utilities should be judged? If you asked me yesterday, I would have doubted it. Today I have changed my mind. The reason is MicroIllusions's *Photon Paint*.

Programmed by Bazbo Soft, *Photon Paint*'s use of HAM (Hold And Modify), which lets all the Amiga's 4096 colours be displayed onscreen simultaneously, is only one technique working with many other well-crafted elements to make this the best Amiga art package I have seen.

The work area gives a first, clean, uncluttered impression with all the Brush and Colour Palette menus located at the top of the screen. This menu contains a 64-colour palette (split into four rows of 16 boxes), a selection of eight brushes varying in size and shape and 14 basic drawing-tool icons (most of them, sensibly, identical to those used in *DeluxePaint II*.)

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE TOOLS

Dotted and **Continuous Freehand** tools are now art utility standards; Dotted leaves an incomplete line following the cursor's path, Continuous Freehand leaves a solid line. **Straight Line** draws a solid line from one specified point to another using the standard click-drag-release method. **Curve** acts in a similar manner: specify the curve's start point, drag the cursor to its end point and create an arc between the points by moving the mouse. The curve isn't fixed until the left mouse button is pressed, so you can experiment until you're happy with the result.

Three icons design **Rectangles**, **Circles** and **Elipses**. Again click-drag-release is used. The icon for each shape is split in two, one half for outlines, the other draws the shape and fills it with the currently selected foreground colour. And there are three methods for filling enclosed areas. **Background** fills with the currently selected foreground colour. **Boundary** fills an area defined by pixels of a specified colour, covering all other colours within the boundary area. **Free Shape** fills an area defined by a freehand-drawn outline, covering all other colours within the boundary; you specify foreground colour and draw the shape you want filled. This is excellent, because irregular shapes can be drawn and filled all in one command.

Lasso is a gem of a command allowing full exploitation of the brush manipulation commands.

Scissor/Lasso is equivalent to grab and block commands found on many utilities. Scissor uses click-drag-release to specify a rectangular area which can be picked up and used like a brush. But all too often the shape you want to grab isn't nicely rectilinear, which can make manipulation almost impossible, especially when the screen is choc-a-bloc with different colours. Lasso is a gem of a command allowing full exploitation of the brush manipulation commands. Exact portions of the screen can be picked up by tracing a freehand line around the desired 'brush' without the need to stick to a regular shape.

Undo reverses the last action, while **Restore Previous Brush** recalls the last custom brush created with the Scissor/Lasso commands.

Pix creates mosaic effects, achieving this by averaging the colours of existing pixels into larger pixels. The level of pixelisation can be increased or decreased until you are happy with the effect.

Magnification changes the crosshair cursor to a miniature magnifying glass which can be positioned over any part of the picture area. Clicking the left mouse button calls up the magnification window containing the enlarged portion of the selected area. At the window's lower-right corner is a resize gadget; point and click and the window can be rescaled by dragging until it's the required size. The window can be moved across the magnified image by clicking any one of the four directional arrows in the upper-right corner, and the degree of magnification changed using the plus or minus gadgets; maximum magnification is satisfyingly big. The window can also be drag-repositioned anywhere in the work area.

The final tool deals with **Text**. The crosshair cursor is replaced with a rectangle representing the approximate size of the letters within the font selected. This is similar to *Degas Elite*'s method – so much friendlier than the T-shaped text cursor of most utilities.

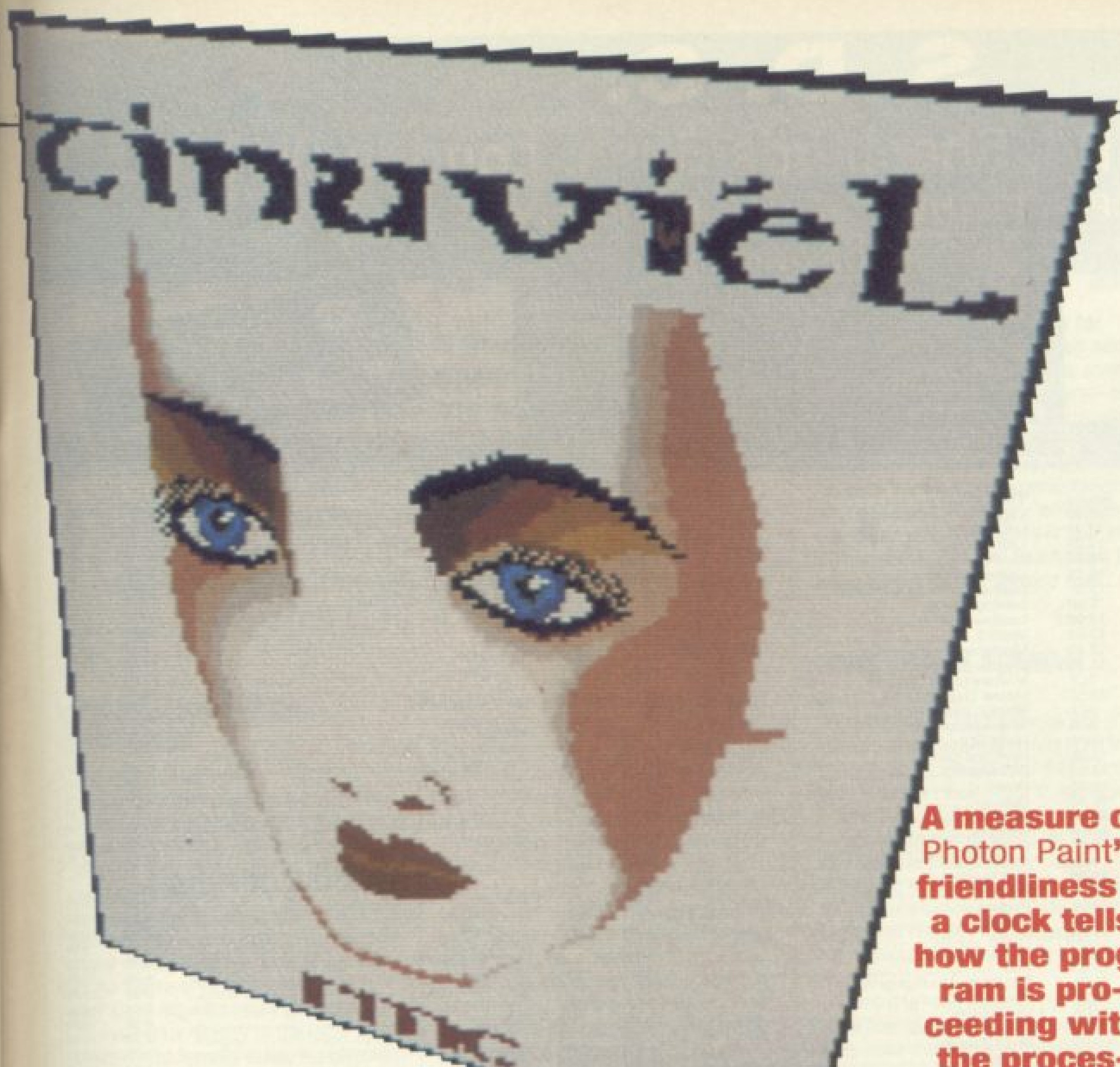
PLAYING WITH COLOURS

Immediately above the Brush and Colour Palette menu is a white menu bar. Position the cursor over it and press the right mouse button and five options appear: Project, Prefs, Brush, Fonts and Mode, from which submenus can be accessed.

Project contains Load, Save, Clear and Print options, and also the **Base Colours** submenu. *Photon Paint* uses 16 base colours which are modified to produce the picture's other colours; therefore they must be picked with care if strange pixel messes, called 'fringes', are not to occur. Base Colours can reside in any of the boxes in the palette but it makes sense to keep them all in the same row to avoid confusion. This is done by selecting the **Current** option in the Base Colours submenu, and all base colours appear in the top row of boxes.

The Base Colours submenu also has the following options: **From Brush** copies base colours from brush to the colour registers, **From Alternate** copies the base colours from an alternate screen (if one has been set up), **Restore** restores the original 16 base colours in memory when the current picture was first loaded, **Default** restores the program to 16 default colours which the program initially selects, **Affect Picture**, selected after the base colours have been altered, tells the program that these are the new base colours. Finally, **Remap Picture** remaps your current picture using the colours in the first 16 palette boxes as the base colours. Unusually (and usefully), redefining a colour in the palette doesn't alter the onscreen colours unless Remap is used.

The colours themselves are chosen through the **Extended Fast Menu**. There are three methods: RGB, HSV



and Colour Selection Squares. The RGB sliders adjust the amount of Red, Green and Blue, HSV sliders alter the colour's position in the spectrum (Hue), while Saturation and Value alter the amount of white and black the colour contains.

For the third method three large colour boxes are used. These represent sections of a 3-D cube containing all of the Amiga's rainbow of 4096 colours. By moving pairs of dots on the sides of the squares new colours can be accessed.

Colour Spreads are defined by selecting two colours, the program working out the intermediate shades for you. From Spreads, dithering is also provided for.

Next to the Project menu is **Preferences**. First option is **Screen Mode**, where screen resolution is defined and consequently the size of the work area selected. *Photon Paint* provides four different resolutions. Through Pref you can also opt to display the cursor's coordinates, load prompts and define mouse speed preferences, all of which can be saved for future reference.



Powerful commands let you wrap a brush around a variety of shapes and Colour selection offers three methods: RGB, HSV or the very pretty colour squares

LET'S TWIST AGAIN

The **Brush** menu contains options to make use of the brushes picked up with the Scissors/Lasso tool. **Trans** specifies whether the brush background colour is transparent or not; if not, the background colour overlays whatever is beneath it. Brushes can be flipped either horizontally or vertically. Selecting **Resize** pulls down yet another submenu with options for rescaling brushes. **Free** stretches the brush to any desired size, while **Double**, **Double Horizontal**, **Double Vertical**, **Halve**, **Halve Horizontal** and **Halve Vertical** all speak for themselves.

Back on the Brush menu, **Twist** distorts the brush image into a 3-D spiral, the degree of twisting specified by moving the mouse. **Rotate** pulls down another submenu with commands to rotate the brush through varying degrees. **Wrap On** wraps custom brushes around a variety of 3-D objects including tubes, cones, elipses, cubes or any symmetrical freehand-drawn shape. Brushes can be bent in several directions using the **Bend** command. One of the most powerful commands is undoubtedly **Tilt**, which places the brush on a 2-D plane that is positioned in 3-D. It involves fiddling around with a lot of variables, but the end effect is well worth the effort.

Another powerful command is **Luminosity**. Here the direction of a light source governing the shading of a 3-D surface upon which the brush will be mapped can be specified, not only direction (it can be in front or behind the object), but also the light's intensity.

A measure of Photon Paint**'s friendliness – a clock tells how the prog-ram is pro-ceeding with the proces-sing.**

It's a measure of *Photon Paint*'s friendliness, that all through these time-consuming features, a countdown clock tells you how the program is proceeding with the processing.

The **Fonts** menu deals with all the varied character sets which can be loaded. Font style and point size are selectable. Characters can be rescaled using Brush commands if there isn't a character set of the required size.

The final menu deals with drawing modes, there are four: **Normal**, Blend, Add and Subtract. **Blend** combines a brush with whatever happens to be underneath it. Below Blend, **Set** defines the level of blending. **Add** adds the current brush colour to that of the background while **Subtract** does the opposite.

HEAD AND SHOULDERS

Any art utility is only really as good as its manual. *Photon Paint*'s is one of the best I've had the pleasure of using. Too often manuals assume the user is computer-literate, never taking into account that it may be a first venture into the world of computer graphics. Not so with *Photon Paint*; each function is explained in great detail in a manner which avoids ambiguities, yet it isn't dauntingly massive.

The functions of this art utility are impressive to say the least. HAM allows for a great deal more colours on screen though the base colours have to defined with care to avoid horrible colour glitches in your pictures. Bearing this in mind, it is very easy to construct a picture containing more than the customary 32 colours. The Brush commands are extremely flexible making creating complex perspective pictures easy, and so many thoughtful touches have been incorporated so that *Photon Paint* stands head and shoulders above any other Amiga art utility today.



Photon Paint **stands head and shoulders above any other Amiga art utility today.**

***Photon Paint* requires 512K RAM minimum, 1Mbyte is recommended for 320 x 400 resolution mode. The program costs £69.99.**

READERPAGE

"I've got an ST. I've also owned a Spectrum since 1983. I don't believe that owning either of these particular consumer goods has guaranteed me a place in heaven or entitles me to snigger at less fortunates . . . "

So writes JOHN TAPPER, the first person to win £40 worth of software for the best letter this month in READERPAGE.

THE ENDOWMENT OF AMIGADOM

Dear Games Machine,
Looking through the letters in the last few issues I spotted a trend which you also noticed in TGM**007**. Lots of people seem obsessed with the type of computer they own and how much better it is than everybody else's. Less people are enthralled by how wonderful computers of any make are at giving us a variation on the theme of entertainment which, after all, is what it's really all about.

I must refer directly to the letter in TGM**007** which really made me chuckle. The one with the heading THE PRICE GAME appears to have been written by an alternative comedian whose speciality is satirical comment on the materialistic extravagance of modern British teenagers. The whole letter is awful, but the bit about buying an Amiga because the possession of such an article will endow some kind of prestige or superiority to the owner is brilliantly sickening.

This, I am sure, will make all of those with a similar attitude to our friend with the Amiga positively furious: I've got an ST. I've also owned a Spectrum since 1983. I don't believe that owning either of these particular consumer goods has guaranteed me a place in heaven or entitles me to snigger at less fortunates; I do know that I have had a moderate degree of entertainment value from the latter. The ST I have only owned for a few months but so far I am not disappointed.

How about a bit of blasphemy – I don't really mind if there are better computers in existence, or even if OTHER PEOPLE actually own them. I think I got a good deal and the games that I have seen so far have impressed both myself and others who have used my machine. Gosh, yes, I do let other people touch my status symbol!

From your various replies to the letters in Readerpage I get the impression that you are consciously trying to present computer-based entertainment as an essential part of some technological whole, rather than a be-all-and-end-all pursuit subscribed to by mindless keyboard freaks who have forgotten what colour the sky is. I think this can be for the best, as a future filled with anaemic, obese software-junkies does not present the prettiest of pictures.

I work with computers every day (IBM mainframes are rubbish for writing arcade games on – especially in COBOL) and I have other leisure interests apart from trying to get through Sector 3 in *Xenon*. However, I can still claim to be frequently amazed at the kind of games (and the advances therein) that appear in the shops every month. What was there ten years ago? Nothing that you could even begin to compare with what is available now. *Space Invaders* and *Galaxian* were just beginning to appear if I remember correctly. I wonder if anyone really cared how many MIPS or sound chips those things had, the first time that 10p dropped into the slot and untrained fingers began to rap out a rhythm on left/right and fire buttons?

It was entertainment sure enough and it still is, provided everyone keeps it in perspective and reads a book or kicks a football once in while.
John Tapper, Herefordshire

It's a salutary note you sound, John. But hasn't it always happened, in every field? Hi-Fi or cameras for instance (not to mention video and camcorders), that possessing madly prefixed or suffixed machinery – the more LEDs the better – becomes a form of techno-insanity which overtakes common sense, and taste. I'm sure we all have acquaintances who will fiddle for hours with their 145-band graphic equaliser and yet have never heard any Beethoven, let alone Status Quo or anyone else . . .

PAGE 69 GIRL SCANDAL

Dear TGM,
THE GAMES MACHINE must be one of the bravest, if not *the* bravest mag of all time. I take it *Barbarian* (Palace) didn't bother you? – doesn't look like it to me anyway – okay there were a lot of very very fussy people about, complaining about Maria Whittaker, but when those same interfering busy bodies who complained about Maria's skimpy clothing turn to page 69 of TGM**007** they're going to have heart failure! There she is in full glory 'Donna'.

I've got to hand it to you, you certainly know how to put some excitement into a mag. I can't wait to see the arguments after this snapshot, all I can say is good luck and I mean GOOD LUCK.
Darren Salisbury, Knaresborough, N Yorks

Actually, it was an accident. The art department here put in the wrong picture (well it was worth a try . . .) But what are we going to do when the male version of Strip Poker 2 comes out?

The next reader had a different approach to the shock of Donna . . .

YOU RUINED THE FUN

Dear TGM,
The screenshot from Anco's *Strip Poker 2*: I'm not bothered that you printed a picture of a nude woman, but I do think that you should not have printed it.

I thought that the whole idea of the game was to work your way through to the final picture. The fact that you printed it has ruined the element of surprise for anybody who bought the game.

Also, Anco's sales might fall now no one need buy the game to see the picture. On the other hand, there is the other girl as well as the various stages of strip to see, so maybe there is reason for someone to buy the game.
Stuart Thomas, Pulborough, W Sussex

For those of you familiar with the fanzine* The Bug*, you might be interested to know that its editor wrote a very strong letter to* Computer Trade Weekly *complaining bitterly that we were aiding the cause of sexism. Now funnily enough, Stuart, you are implying the opposite – that by printing the completed picture of Donna we might actually prevent people buying the game, which surely



is not aiding the cause of sexism? Or is it? We don't know, we just like to prove we can get through a game . . .

SEGA AND NINTENDO

Dear Games Machine,
I am the proud owner of a Sega console and after reading your feature on Rare (TGM**004**) and hearing about brilliant Japanese games becoming available here soon, I also bought a Nintendo.

Although *Super Mario Bros* is good, none of the other games on the Nintendo are up to the same standard and certainly aren't worth £20-£30.

I feel the majority of Nintendo owners are waiting for new games to be imported. But, when I rang a Nintendo problem line I was told no games would be released this year. I am beginning to think it was a mistake buying the console. Do you have any idea what's going on?

Luckily, the Sega is a complete contrast. They have got their act together and new games are being released every month. I have yet to find a sub-standard Sega game.
Jonathan Stevens, York

The Nintendo situation in Britain is strange. NESI, the Nintendo marketing force in the UK has certainly allocated a massive budget to a TV advertising campaign for Christmas this year, and yet, like you Jonathan, we are told that there are no big games releases planned. Further, the Nintendo machines selling so well in America and Japan are not to be introduced into Britain in the foreseeable future although this could be a ploy to ensure the current stocks of inferior Nintendo machines we have already seen are cleared out first.

The next writer also has comments to make on Nintendo . . .

IMPROVE SEGA COVERAGE

Dear Games Machine,
I own a Sega, CBM 64 and Spectrum, and the coverage in TGM for the latter two is great; 16-bit and other format coverage is perfect as I enjoy comparing versions of each game. But, and it's a big but, Sega coverage is very poor. There's next to no previews/news on forthcoming titles and reviews are scarce (what happened to *Fantasy Zone 2*, *Kung Fu Kid*?). Of course I am aware you can only review the games that you are supplied with, if you don't receive some new games surely you could be supplied with a review copy somehow.

I also just purchased a Nintendo and I am of course interested in reading about it, but your coverage is pathetic. No previews/news, only two reviews ever! Surely there are some new games being released (I hope so as I am waiting for these new arcade conversions and I hope I haven't just wasted £100.00.)
Gary W Daley, London SE10

We'll look to improving Sega coverage, but you are right about our not receiving much in the way of either games or information. The Nintendo position was covered above.



YOU SHOULD MOVE AWAY FROM 8-BIT

Dear Games Machine,
I have just sent you the Questionnaire (TGM**006**) and can't do but add some comments.

I am an Atari ST owner and a TGM subscriber since Issue 4. I want my computer to be an entertainment, and therefore I like computer games and buy a computer games magazine hoping to get features like news, previews, reviews, maps, hints . . . Others like Mel's reports or Info Desk add to make a good magazine. But don't go wrong – like *C&VG* did – and leave out non-computer features.

I totally agree with Nigel Roust (TGM**006**). You should move away to just the 16-bit machines. There are a lot of magazines covering the 8-bit market, and I don't think you can compete – perhaps you don't want to – with magazines like CRASH and ZZAP!64.
Agustin Malave, Spain

When you look through this issue you will see that there are plenty of non-computer items. And while TGM concentrates heavily on 16-bit, we all feel we are committed to supporting the 8-bit market as well.

COMPARING PRESENTATION

Dear Games Machine,
Why are people never happy until they have something to complain about. Yes, even I'm complaining about people complaining.

No offence to David Bick (TGM**006**), but why does TGM have to be like ZZAP! and CRASH in its presentation? When I first heard TGM was coming out I thought 'great, I can't wait to see what this magazine will be like'. I wasn't disappointed. A totally different approach from any of Newsfield's other mags. A more mature look at a more mature range of computer. I'm not knocking ZZAP and CRASH, as they are aimed at a younger section of the public. That's how it comes across to me anyway.

I find the layout and basic presentation of the magazine very easy to follow and very pleasing. No distractions to the eye. Just straight talk and good articles.

I am not opposed to improving the magazine, but I would just like to stress that I find the magazine format at present very acceptable. Why does it have to be fancy? Oh by the way, if you do have trouble finding articles in your magazine David, try using the index at the start, very useful.
Mark Fletcher, Glasgow

It's impossible to please everybody all the time, and of course most magazines suit the people who put them together, because that's the only way it can ever work – all you hope for is that most of the time, most of the readers will agree with your decisions. We get letters from many upset at the more sober approach of TGM, but what would be the point in repeating the CRASH or ZZAP! formula?

AN UNMERCIFULLY ANNOYED WOMAN WRITES

Dear Guys go down a space no don't write it do it.
What are you trying to pull here? I'm talking make this capitals bad publicity underline that no that lever there oh forget it —— no it's too late now.

New paragraph no don't write

Oh god you silly old fool let me d

Sorry about that I was trying to dictate to Dad.

Anyway, this is the second time you've printed a letter by some semi-literate wimp ('mega-naff' and 'brill' . . . well, says it all, doesn't it?) who finds my adventures less than interesting. What about all the ones you get singing my praises? I know you do get them, and you won't find one lapse of bad taste in any of them, just good solid verbal applause. Probably. Well, how could I know, I didn't write them. You could prove it.

Blimey, it's bad enough having Croucher making me tell him my bloody life story once a month when I've got other things to worry about, and having that other skinny four-eyed Mekon lookalike looming over me with his scabby sketch pad all the time without this garbage from your lot.

I'll go and rub myself up against one of the booby magazines editors if I have any more of your old buck, then what silly sods you'll all look.
Lotsa Luv
Mercy

PS. There's too much about Computer Games in TGM. Seems to be on every page. Can we have more on beauty tips and Welsh Rugger? Oh – and a bad pub guide.
PPS. I suppose Cutey Poo is quite funny.

No comment.

LET'S HEAR FROM THE INTERESTING PEOPLE

Dear Games Machine,
What can I say? Your magazine is the best I have ever laid eyes on. It is very informative in its reviews and articles, and uses eye-catching, yet not gaudy colours to convey its message. In comparison to other magazines it is in a class of its own, as are all the Newsfield magazines.

I have bought your magazines since Issue one, and have both enjoyed and scrutinised every page. My favourites being the letters pages and your reviews.

One thing I cannot understand is the constant feuding between ST and Amiga Owners. Why every month must we suffer endless moans about which is better? You should rename the pages '16-Bit Feud'. Then they can air their views there, instead of hijacking the letters page. Why can't we have informative, humorous letters to fill our lives with hope and joy?

I like it that TGM is not just a computer magazine. It incorporates other subjects like boardgames and future technology. So why don't we see letters on these subjects, that might amuse us or inform us? I'd like to read about other things instead of complaints about software prices and standards, and 16-bit owners.
Dominick Reed, Preston, Leics

You're right Dominick, there should be letters on subjects other than computer games. Perhaps Stuart Wynne's feature on Cyberpunk might spark some controversy, and what about some comments on Mel's bulletin board investigation?

We need your input to READERPAGE because it's yours to fill. Best letter each month in the opinion of the team wins its sender £40 worth of software. Write to: READERPAGE, THE GAMES MACHINE, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB.

INFORMATION DESK

Robin Hogg sifts through your letters once more and comes up with answers to burning questions

I RAHAMAN, London, asks about the Sega console system.

- What is the mysterious extension compartment at the base of my Sega control deck for? The console's instructions offer no help.

It's a form of interface. Sega are looking into ways of using the extension compartment with future peripherals. There's certainly nothing at the moment.

IAN ROBINSON, of Tottenham, London (my favourite football team) asks . . .

- I've become aware of the shortage of computer chips and subsequent price increases of computers like the ST. Why is this happening?

American manufacturers of Dynamic RAM (D-RAM) chips used in many home computers (Atari and Amstrad certainly) raised their prices following trade restrictions against cheaper Japanese chips. Computer manufacturers unwilling to buy at higher prices are now experiencing a shortage. Atari has switched to the more expensive V-RAM (Video RAM) chips, hence the ST price increase to £400. Amstrad, too, has been forced to raise prices. Commodore are keeping Amiga prices steady, seemingly unaffected by chip shortages. If you look around, you can still get some machines at old prices, but Atari's new offer (over £400 worth of free software with the £399.99 520 STFM) is excellent in its own right.

GARY CHAPLIN, Stowmarket, Suffolk has a simple question . . .

- What exactly are TV modulators, and what are they for?

TV modulators are necessary for machines, such as the Amiga and ST, intended to operate with high quality RGB output monitors. Televisions, by contrast, use a cruder RF composite video output. Monitors have a faster screen update, about 60hz, so a signal intended for one must be stepped down to operate TVs which run at only 50hz.

Liverpudlian RUSS FLAHERTY has written enquiring about the Amiga.

- Can you plug replacement CPUs such as the MC 68010 straight in, or does the Amiga need to be opened up? If the chip is installed, is it possible to switch between 68000 and replacement chip? Does it operate at a faster rate than the 68000?

In fact the MC 68010 is a straight replacement for the Amiga CPU chip. Fitting naturally requires opening up the machine – voiding the warranty.

The Amiga Centre in Scotland (031-557-4242) is working on an interface allowing the Amiga 500 to hold a 68000 chip, and more powerful chips such as the 68020. Whether it will be possible to switch between chips is another matter. The Amiga 2000 already has special expansion slots allowing other parallel coprocessors to be added, giving a dramatic increase in speed.

Russ also wants to know when . . .

- . . . is *Elite* from Firebird coming out on the Amiga?

It's planned to follow an ST release later this year. No firm release date or price yet.

Moving overseas, ITAMAR ELHANANY, a member of a large Israeli Amiga Users' club, isn't asking about Amigas but about wrist-watches, of all things.

- Have you any information on Seiko's RC 4000 wrist-computer, and could I have Seiko's address?

Claimed as the world's smallest computer terminal, the RC 4000 can receive/transmit information from/to IBM PCs, Spectrums, Commodore 64/128s, Apple II series and the BBC range. The watch stores data up to 2K and scrolls it across the watchface as 24-character pages; up to 80 pages containing some 2,000 characters (or quarter of a TGM page.) The alarm can be set for 80 events per year in advance, or on a daily basis – though this shortens the two-year battery lifespan.

The address: Seiko, Hattori UK Ltd, *Hattori House, Vanwall Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 4UW*

☎ (0628) 770001.

GARY SHAW, Cleethorpes, South Humberside and STACEY KING, Goff's Oak, Hertfordshire both ask . . .

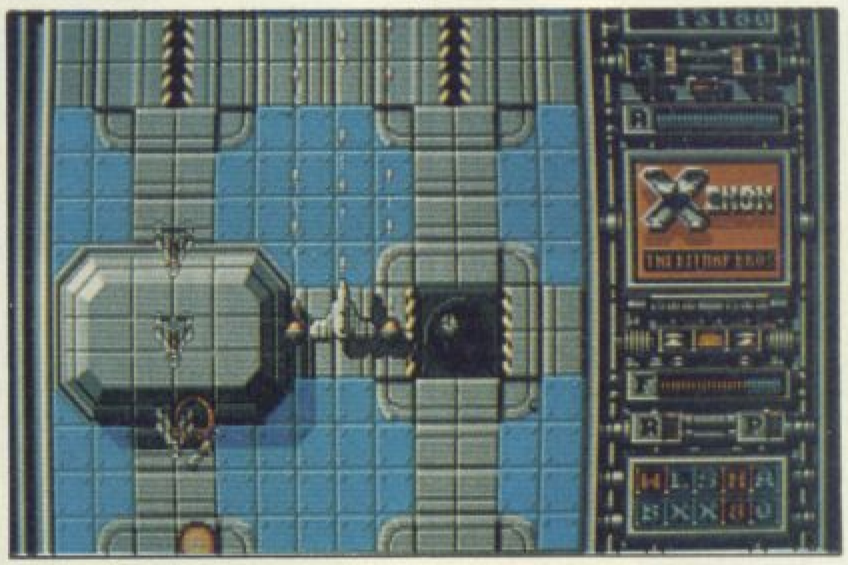
- Where can you get leads to connect an Amiga to a hi-fi, enabling stereo sound?

Take a look in TGM's Mail Order section (pages 109-113) this month; you should find an Amiga Stereo Sound kit on offer for the princely sum of £9.95, allowing a link from your machine to most hi-fis (including your Amstrad MS-45 Gary!).

In TGM007 Readerpage, STEPHEN TANG asked Jon Bates which machine, ST or Amiga, is best for synthesising music, speech and connecting up to MIDI instruments. Stephen also wanted to know which has the best sound qualities on TVs and monitors. Take it away John . . .

As most monitors have the sonic quality of a wasp in a tobacco tin, external amplification is fairly essential, which is easier done on the Amiga – and it's also in stereo. However, the ST has built-in MIDI ports and could save you a lot on buying the necessary interface. Also there's much more ST MIDI software available, although it can cost anything up to £500. The actual quality of the content of the software on both machines is pretty even, but it all depends on how you see your micro functioning – either as a stand-alone unit (Amiga) or as a centre for musical control with a wide software base (Atari ST.) I suggest you keep your eyes glued to the music pages for further reviews of packages for both machines.

A quick tip for Melbourne House's *Xenon* from ROD WILLIAMS of Barnet in Hertfordshire.



Stand up to the sentinel in Xenon *– ST screen*

- In sector 2, defeat the first sentinel and then crash the ship into the side wall, losing all energy. When the next ship comes along, all the aliens are gone and you only have the sentinel to beat!

D SMITH, Rayleigh, Essex owns an Atari ST and is thinking of purchasing a printer . . .

- Can you recommend a dot matrix printer around the £200-£250 mark suitable for printing documents and invoices clearly? I would also want it to print computer graphics from art packages such as *Degas Elite* and *Neochrome*.

Epson set a much-cloned standard for dot matrix printers. If you have *1st Word*, for instance, a preset Epson FX-80 print-driver is inevitably included on the disk. Colour is a rarer, more expensive, commodity. Until recently one of the cheapest was the Juki 5510 for £310 with a colour kit for an additional £86. Now there's a new Star printer, the LC-10, at £259 with colour. It has quick draft and slower NLQ (Near Letter Quality) mode, which gives excellent results. If you fit the four-colour print ribbon you get slow, but reasonable output, though care should be taken not to let the ribbon get dirty. *Degas Elite* only comes with a driver for an Epson colour printer which, according to Electronic Arts, won't work perfectly with the Star. To get a better print-driver, they recommend you contact one of the bigger User Groups, such as Compuserve in the US (☎ 0101-614-457-8650.)

Electronic Arts is considering a wider range of print-drivers.

The final two questions this month are from PAUL HARTHEN, Stalybridge, Cheshire.

- Is there, or will there be, an art package for the Sega console? If so, are there any plans for a printer to be used with the console?

No is the simple answer. A Sega printer would be most unlikely considering the lack of an effective on-board storage medium and the console's general inflexibility compared to home computers.

If you have queries concerning computers and electronic entertainment, write to INFORMATION DESK, THE GAMES MACHINE, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB*. You can also computer MBX us with I-D TGM.

UNCLE MEL'S TRIVIA QUIZ

It took a lot this month to drag him away from his keyboard, modem and phone and several sessions of computerised heavy breathing on many bulletin boards, but finally, bored of bawds the bard of bull came up with yet another entirely trivial quiz to test your reflexes and prove again that you are a Person Renowned in Computer Knowledge (17 out of 20 that is).

1) What makes the 'Thor' compact disc remarkable?

2) Who said: 'I hate computers as much as I hate peanuts. But I can't stop eating peanuts!' **a)** HG Wells, **b)** Orson Wells, **c)** Kylie Minogue

3) Where would you find 'Drak', 'Drax' and 'Dross'?

4) Which software houses can you find lurking in FIB DIRER, PISSY SNOG and DAM RN SLAG?

5) What have Paul Daniels and Bob Holness got in common? **a)** ludicrous hairpieces, **b)** ludicrous salaries, **c)** ludicrous Domark



6) Who is this person, and does his name rhyme with **a)** 'catchin', **b)** 'bracken', **c)** 'prawn'

7) If Clair-Voyance means 'seeing clearly', and Sinclair means 'obscured', why is Sir Clive's surname Sinclair?

8) In that case, why did the Clair-Voyant cross the road?

9) Last year, did Atari's employees generate more or less than £100,000 each?

10) Last year, did IBM make more or less than Atari per employee?

11) In what year did Herman Hollerith give birth to IBM? **a)** 1890, **b)** 1930, **c)** 1970

12) What four-letter-word beginning with 'C' am I thinking of? Clues: *Strip Poker II* has a digitised one, Rod Cousens has a cute little golden one and I am one.

13) What is a 'quintal'?

14) How many Martian Pubs does it take to change a floppy disk?

15) Where would you find Roland next to a Prophet?

16) Why is Piranha Software like coitus interruptus?

17) True or false? US Gold's hero Charlie Chaplin had his corpse stolen in real life.

18) What did the House of Lords decide last April? **a)** convicted hackers should be hung, **b)** hacking is punishable under the Copyright Act, **c)** hacking is legal.

19) Apart from very silly names, what do Iggy Rock and Zowie Scott have in common?

20) What sort of a creature is Mercy Dash's Rover?

ANSWERS:

1) You can erase and record it for ever and ever, Amen
2) b) Orson Welles
3) *Obliterator, Barbarian, Sinclair User Accounts Dpt'*
4) Firebird, Psygnosis and Grandslam
5) Absolutely, old boy
6) Domark's Mark Strachan, who rhymes with 'prawn'.
7) Because his dad's name was Sinclair
8) To get to the other side
9) More; £500 million from 3,700 people = £135,000 each
10) Exactly the same; £54,000 million from 400,000 people = £135,000 each
11) a) 1890
12) a 'Card' (at least I think that's how you spell it)
13) 100 kilos (or Tim Best's stomach)
14) Three: one to work, one to rest and one to play
15) On a rack of synthesizers, or possibly Hyde Park Corner
16) They've both had their flow withdrawn.
17) True: now how do we get rid of the game?
18) c) – it also recommended a change in the law to make hacking a criminal offence.
19) Programmers of Konami's *Salamander*
20) a goldfish, a dodo, a sheep, an anteater, an ape, a turtle or a polar bear

NEXT MONTH
IN THE GAMES MACHINE!

- **THE CES SHOW**
As we go to press, Marshal T Rosenthal is at the CES show in Chicago to report on the US Nintendo boom. Over 40 companies will be promoting Nintendo software – and we reveal the 16-bit Nintendo; read our six-page coverage and yearn.

- **DRAGON'S LAIR – THE LASER DISC**
The classic cartoon-style arcade adventure is to be made commercially available. We take a look at the hardware required and let the review team loose on the game.

- **PARSEC PIXEL+**
We promised it for this month, but it didn't turn up in time. However, the utility is too good to miss and you do deserve the best – so we're promising it again . . . next month. Keep everything crossed!

- **I ACCUSE**
Mel Croucher investigates behind *Star Wars, Back To The Future* and *Bladerunner* . . . were they original or has it all been done before?

- **CYBERPUNK**
Stuart Wynne continues delving into the filthy habits of cyberpunks

PLUS THE GAMES MACHINE's effervescent look at the very latest in reviews – (is there anything out there to beat *Dark Side*?) – previews, adventures, boardgames, roleplay, play by mail, competitions, techno-gadgets, graphics, not to mention Jon Bates and his MSX music special. Don't Miss Something Xellent, TGM**009** hits the streets on July 21.

ADVERTISERS' INDEX



AVAILABLE NOW FOR AMSTRAD PC & COMPATIBLE MICROS
ARKANOID
TAITO COIN-OP
REVENGE OF DOH
YOUR SINCLAIR MEGAGAME
gorgeous visual presentation
weapon enhancements and
addictive gameplay, and you
have Revenge of Doh."
ZZap C64
"Immensely impressive and chronically addictive sequel and takes the Arkanoid format into previously uncharted areas of excellence. A classic."
Your Sinclair.
ZZAP! 64
NOW AVAILABLE FOR THE ATARI ST £19·95
imagine
..the name of the game
Licensed from © Taito Corp., 1986
SPECTRUM CASS £7.95 AMSTRAD CASS £8.95 COMMODORE CASS £8.95
SPEC + 3 £14.95 C64 DISK £12.95 AMS DISK £14.95
Adding to the fun and excitement of Arkanoid... All new features include exit choices to vastly increase the screen options, many extra "VAUS" effects, multiple shots and a secret additional alien to contend with. This adds up to the most thrilling reaction game since ARKANOID but with so many improvements you just won't be able to stop playing...
6 CENTRAL STREET · MANCHESTER · M2 5NS · TELEPHONE 061 834 3939 · TELEX 669977 · FAX 061 834 0650


No 1 BEST SELLING COMPILATION PACK
WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS
ALL THESE CHART TOPPING HITS
RENEGADE
TAITO COIN-OP
IK+
BARBARIAN The Ultimate Warrior
RAMPAGE
ACTIVISION
SUPER SPRINT
RENEGADE
In the knife-edge world of the vigilante there is no place to rest, no time to think – but look sharp – there is always time to die! You will encounter the disciples of evil who's mission it is to exterminate the only man on earth who dares to throw down the guantlet in their path – the Renegade. PLAY RENEGADE...PLAY MEAN!
Licensed from ©Taito Corp., 1986.
IK+
They called International Karate 'the greatest Karate beat 'em up yet' (Commodore User). And who are we to argue? But ARCHER MACLEAN has come up with a stunner: A third fighter. An amazing animated background. New moves (including double head-kick and a spectacular backflip). Re-mixed music by ROB HUBBARD. And balls!
©1987 Archer Maclean ©1987 System 3 Software Ltd.
SUPER SPRINT
Licensed from Atari Games' original money-spinning coin-op, one or two players compete head-to-head over eight gruelling tracks and four levels of game difficulty. Avoid the hazards and collect golden spanners to enhance custom car features – the key to Super Sprint. With detailed animation and sound effects, Super Sprint brings the best driving excitement ever to be experienced on home computers.
TM & ©Atari Corporation 1986. All Rights Reserved. ©Electric Dreams Software 1987.
RAMPAGE
The game where the nice guys don't get a look in.
Grab your way through Chicago, punch up New York, and jump on San Francisco. Three indescribably nasty characters which bear a remarkable likeness to King Kong, Godzilla and Wolf-man, need you to send them on a rampage in an enduring 150 days of destruction, through 50 different cities.
TM & ©1986 Bally Midway MFG. Co. All rights reserved. Activision Inc.
BARBARIAN
THE STORY SO FAR...
The evil sorcerer Drax has sworn to wreak an unspeakable doom on the people of the Jewelled City unless Princess Mariana is delivered to him. However, he has agreed that if a champion can be found who is able to defeat his demonic guardians, the Princess will be released. From the wastelands of the North, comes an unknown barbarian, a mighty warrior, wielding his broadsword with deadly skill. Can he vanquish the forces of Darkness and free the Princess? ONLY YOU CAN SAY...
©Palace Software 1987.
IN A SINGLE GIANT PACK
ONLY £9.95 EACH
ocean
OUT NOW!
Ocean Software Limited · 6 Central Street · Manchester · M2 5NS · Telephone 061 832 6633 · Telex 669977 OCEANS G